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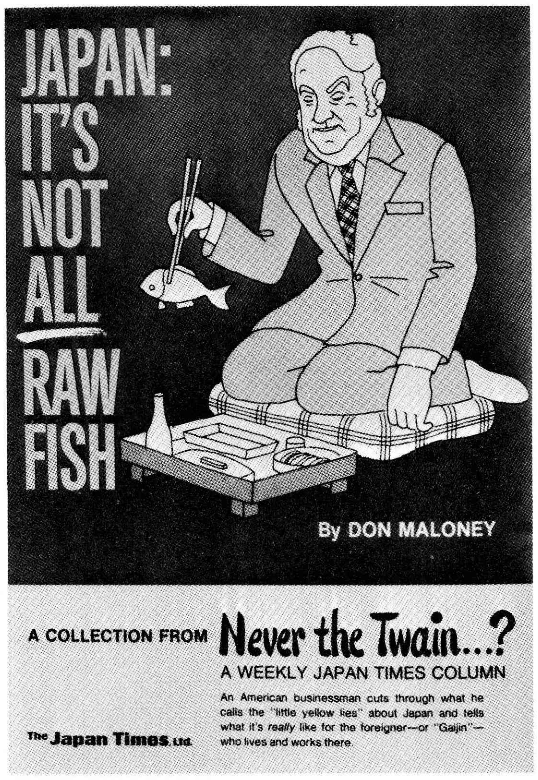
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How to Savor the Flavor of Sake

Winter 1977
Vol.15–No.1



BOOKS ON JAPAN



JAPAN: IT'S NOT ALL RAW FISH

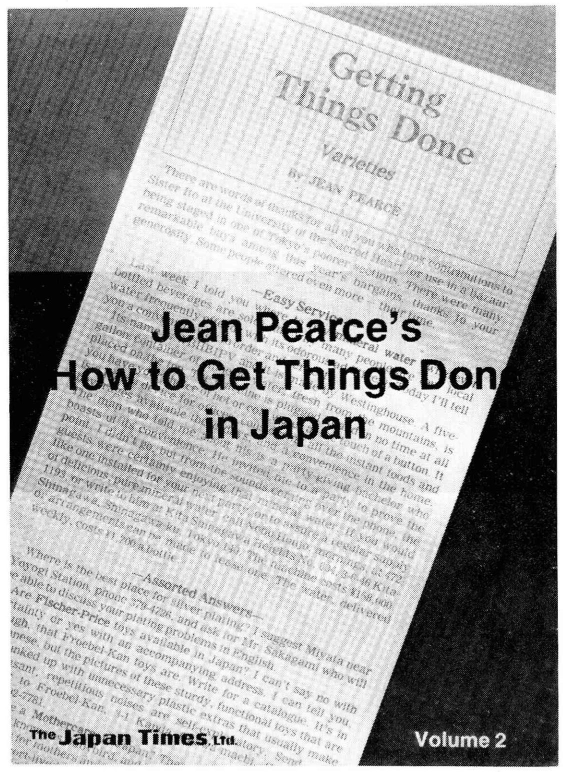
by Don Maloney

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The Japan Times, Ltd.

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Jean Pearce's

How to Get Things Done in Japan

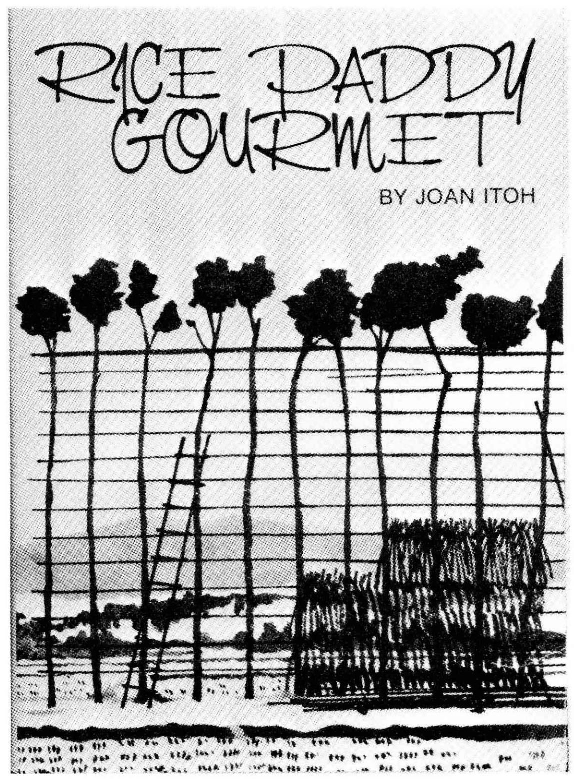
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by Joan Itoh

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This is a different kind of cook book. Written by an American lady who has lived in the north of Japan for the past 10 years, 'Rice Paddy Gourmet' is a book that you may enjoy reading even if you have no interest in cooking at all.

Japan Illustrated

January 1977 (Vol. 15, No. 1)

CONTENTS



Cover photo: Youths disguised as demons roam about the peninsular district of Akita Prefecture on winter nights, visiting farmhouses and admonishing the laggards among the family. The head of the household serves the visitors with some sake and rice cakes as a token of appreciation. This strange custom is called "namahage."
(Photo by Teruo Hayashi)

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All About Sake,

Left: Sake lends itself to a variety of drinking cups—porcelain, wood and glass.



Japan's National Drink

Photos by Japan Illustrated



A row of 20-gallon kegs graces the bar of this specialty tavern. Each cask bears the trade mark of a sake maker on the straw wrapper.

How to Save the Flavor of Sake

Right: Typical of the tens of thousands of Japanese-style sake taverns across the country is Iseto, an old establishment in Kagurazaka, Tokyo. Here, the proprietor warms the sake over an open hearth. On display on shelves in the background is his prized collection of sake bottles and cups.

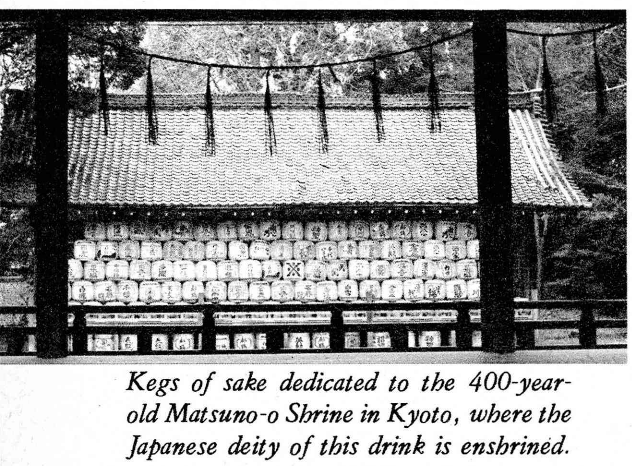
By David M. Jones

IT may seem curious that one who is identified as a wine-lover should write about sake, even though it is erroneously called a rice-wine. But anyone sincerely interested in wine eventually finds himself eager to discover what he can about other alcoholic beverages. For oenological pleasures are so great that he assumes all related drinks, i.e., those containing alcohol, will provide similar satisfaction.

In the course of his investigations, though, he soon learns that the so-called mixed drinks, like martinis, manhattans and even more complicated concoctions, are not worth the effort of further study. They are, in the final analysis, merely flavored alcohol, ranging from dry martinis with hardly any taste but the pungency of juniper berries to the cloyingly sweet of others. He comes to the conclusion, then, that the objective of those imbibing such lethal complexities is not to appreciate a carefully-produced beverage but to get drunk as soon as possible, a goal which they achieve in minimum time, leaving their scarred tongues senseless to finer flavors.

Sake, however, rewards further study. For it is like wine in bouquet, taste, body and flavor. It is the finest of Japanese alcoholic drinks, in my opinion, better even than the justly-famed Japanese beer. It resembles to some degree Spanish sherry, the best and only legitimate sherry made, not only in alcoholic content but also in its varying types, which run the gamut from dry to sweet. But heed this word of caution: though sherry and sake have a resemblance, it must not be taken too seriously. Sake has its own qualities to commend it and needs nothing, similarities or comparisons, to raise its status.

If sake resembles wine, why is it incorrect to call it a rice-wine? Because it is brewed like a beer, not vinified. There is a difference between brewing and vinification. It lies in the number of steps it takes to produce alcohol. In the former, two reactions are necessary; in the latter, only one. To clarify—and I simplify here as I assume the reader is more interested in information than a chemistry lesson — the starch in grain, sprouted barley or malt in the case of beer, must first be changed into sugars which then, with the help of yeasts, are broken down into alcohol and carbon dioxide. In grapes and other fruits, the natural sugars are transformed by yeast action (wild yeasts cover the grape skins like a fine powder) directly into the two end products.



Kegs of sake dedicated to the 400-year-old Matsuno-o Shrine in Kyoto, where the Japanese deity of this drink is enshrined.

There is another comparison between brewing and vinification. In brewing, human help is necessary to get the process started. Man must first convert the rice and barley into starch. In the case of rice, it is steamed. In vinification, man needs only to pick the grapes and put them where the yeasts can do their work. Because artificial means are not necessary in wine-making, theory has it that wine preceded beer in fermentation history. As the story goes, someone picked a bunch of grapes, stored them in a neolithic receptacle and forgot about them. Then, one day, lo and behold! when the forgotten fruit was remembered, it had changed itself into something tasty with a kick.

To return to the subject of sake; in Japan, where there is rice, there is sake. Almost all Japan's 47 prefectures produce it. Even Tokyo has a brewery, but only one. Hyogo Prefecture has the most, 239, followed by Okayama, Hiroshima and Fukushima.

Today, most sakes are sweet, a postwar phenomenon, according to the aficionados, who like theirs dry. They are the ones who, in ordering it, ask for *karakuchi*, which means dry sake. If the restaurant has only sweet or *amakuchi*, they shift to beer. The reason for *amakuchi*'s popularity, these experts say, lies in the fact that, in the postwar years, more women and youths have taken to drinking sake; and those two segments of the population are notorious for having a sweet tooth.

To find the origin of sake in Japan, one has to go beyond recorded Japanese history and into mythology; in other words, beyond the sixth century, when the Japanese began to keep records, and into the Yayoi Period, over 2,000 years ago. Then, as legend has it, the production of the beverage was exclusively in the hands of *toji*, or maidens with special duties attached to shrines. The method was unique. The *toji* would chew boiled rice until it was thoroughly salivated and then expectorate the soggy substance into a receptacle, where it fermented. What they did not know, since chemical knowledge was undoubtedly at low tide in those days, was that by applying saliva to the rice, they broke its starch down into sugars. Then, in the receptacle, the masticated mass was attacked by wild yeasts, which converted the sugars into alcohol. However, this primitive though interesting process was discontinued when a more modern and sanitary way was introduced via the Korean Peninsula from China. That method, continually improved over the years and centuries by the hit-and-miss technique generally, is what we have today.

USUALLY, sake is served warm in small thimble-like cups, called *choko*. This is the way preferred by many because, according to sake lovers, the little cups keep the liquid warm and smooth and the bouquet at its best. This phenomenon, whereby a smaller serving seems to improve the drink, must have something to do with the boiling point of alcohol. Those who know their wines know that wine should not be served at today's room temperature, which hovers around and even goes above 70 degrees Fahrenheit. For they are aware that alcohol boils at 78 degrees Fahrenheit and that, long before that temperature is reached, the alcohol begins to evaporate. In the case of warm sake, the alcohol, which is as high as 18 per cent by volume, passes off in the steam, reducing the percentage in the drink and smoothing it out. Everyone, of course, knows that a beverage loses alcohol as it matures and that it is the alcohol loss which is a major factor in giving smoothness to age. As for bouquet, it is a product of the alcohol and esters which are wafted by the heat into the air.

But it is a mistake to say, as the prestigious Encyclopedia Britannica does, that sake "is always served warm." The authority who wrote that article must never have heard of *reishu*, or sake that is served cold. Another authority on wines and spirits, Alexis Lichine, whom I hold in reverence, errs slightly in his discussion of sake when he writes in his Encyclopedia of Wines and Spirits that "sake... is rather sweet." Apparently, Mr. Lichine has never heard of *karakuchi*.

This knocking down of authorities has a purpose. It shows that sake is not well-known outside Japan but isn't this like most things Japanese? I do not arrogate to myself the position of an expert on the subject, but I do have the comfortable feeling that I know a little more about it than some published authorities.

In discussing sake, one must not forget to mention that delightful beverage called *hirezake*, in which a dried fin of *fugu*, the deadly blowfish, is steeped to impart a distinctive though rather sweet flavor. This is the only drink to take with *fugu*, one of Japan's great delicacies. It is best in Fukuoka and other parts of Kyushu, and its season is winter. Whenever I go to Fukuoka in the late fall or winter, I always make it a point to go to a *fugu* restaurant at least once to order the fish a la *sashimi*, followed by its *pot au feu* variant with plenty of *shirako* (modesty and a sense of sympathy for the *fugu* restrains me from explaining what *shirako* is); and all accompanied by glass after glass of *hirezake*.

Glass, not *choko*? For me, yea. I'm one of those who prefer drinking their sake in a glass. In this way, the alcohol evaporates at a slower rate, the body is maintained and, to my nose, the bouquet improves. I am happy to note that many a Japanese friend follows the same practice, i.e., asking for a

Continued on Page 6







Left: Another Tokyo "pub," Kushihachi, specializes in yakitori, grilled chicken à la Japonaise. This Roppongi tavern boasts a sizable foreign clientèle (photo by Nobuaki Fukui). Above: A sample of Japanese table d'hôte. The sake cup placed in the foreground and the bottles on the fringe speak of the important place sake occupies in Japanese-style dining.

Continued from Page 4

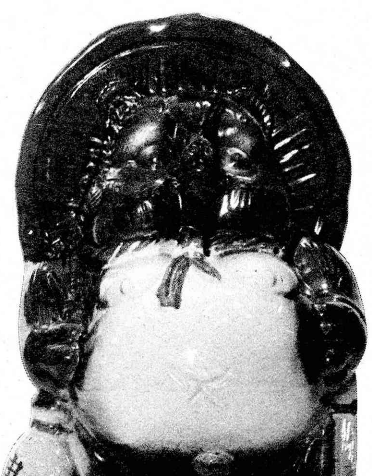
glass when sake is served. To tell the truth, I learned the custom from a Japanese whom I consider one of the greatest sake experts out.

There is another way of drinking sake, reserved for those times when one is dining at a restaurant specializing in *yakitori*. Then the beverage is served in large mugs, about the size of coffee cups found in U.S. Navy messes. This sake, too, gets better as its temperature cools, or, rather, as the alcoholic evaporation rate diminishes.

As a matter of fact, it was at a *yakitori-ya* where I first began my forays into the realm of sake, and it was from a large steaming ceramic cup from which I had my first drink. This occasion occurred over 21 short years ago, when I first came to Japan. I was the guest of a Japanese gourmet, who took me to his favorite *yakitori* restaurant. After a nip of the chicken and a sip of the sake, it became mine. It is situated in Nihonbashi, and I have never met its equal since. As course after course of the barbecued bird came by, and the mugs of sake were served up, I became incurably addicted to the combination.

What about other foods with sake? There is a saying with regard to wine that it is always wiser to eat and drink the local products. This principle holds true for Japan. Sake goes best with Japanese foods: with *sushi* and its riceless relative, *sashimi*; with *oden*; with *tempura*; with *sukiyaki*; with *soba*; and all the rest. In the case of *soba*, hot and cold should be taken together, never warm sake with warm *soba.* With raw-fish dishes, dry sake is better. With *oden*, which is somewhat sweet, I prefer an *amakuchi*.

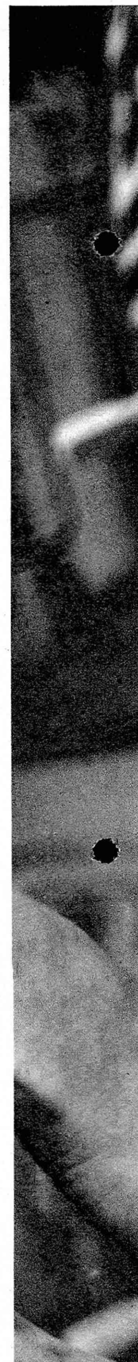
Japanese cuisine is varied, ranging from raw to boiled, to grilled, to steamed, to baked, with all its variations, there is a sake to match. When in doubt, apply the taste test. If food and drink go well together, they are well-paired. If they don't, switch to another kind of sake, either up or down the scale of sweetness, depending on the food.



Ceramic badger carrying old-style sake bottle is found near the approach to many a tavern.



There are still some antique-style taverns here and there in Japan. This one nestles in the Asakusa district of Tokyo.





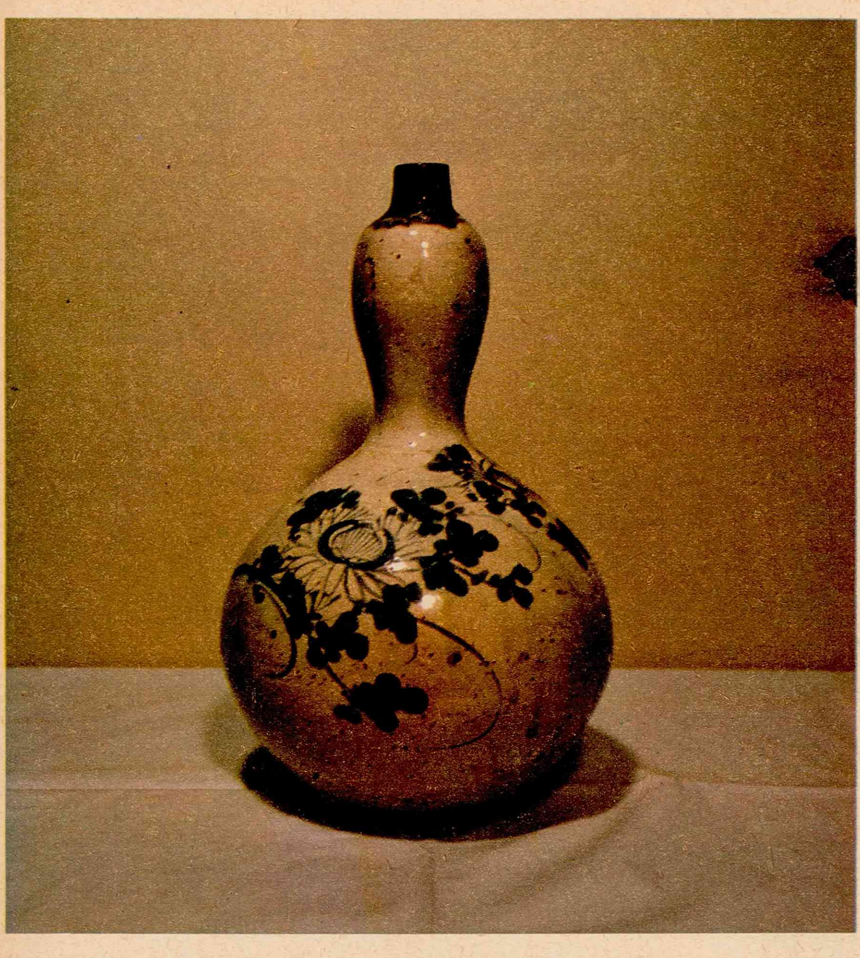
Some "pubs" stick to the traditional way of serving sake.

Kikyo-ya, a proudly ancient tavern in the neon-lit Ginza district of Tokyo, is ready with a wide variety to suit the individual tastes of aficionados.

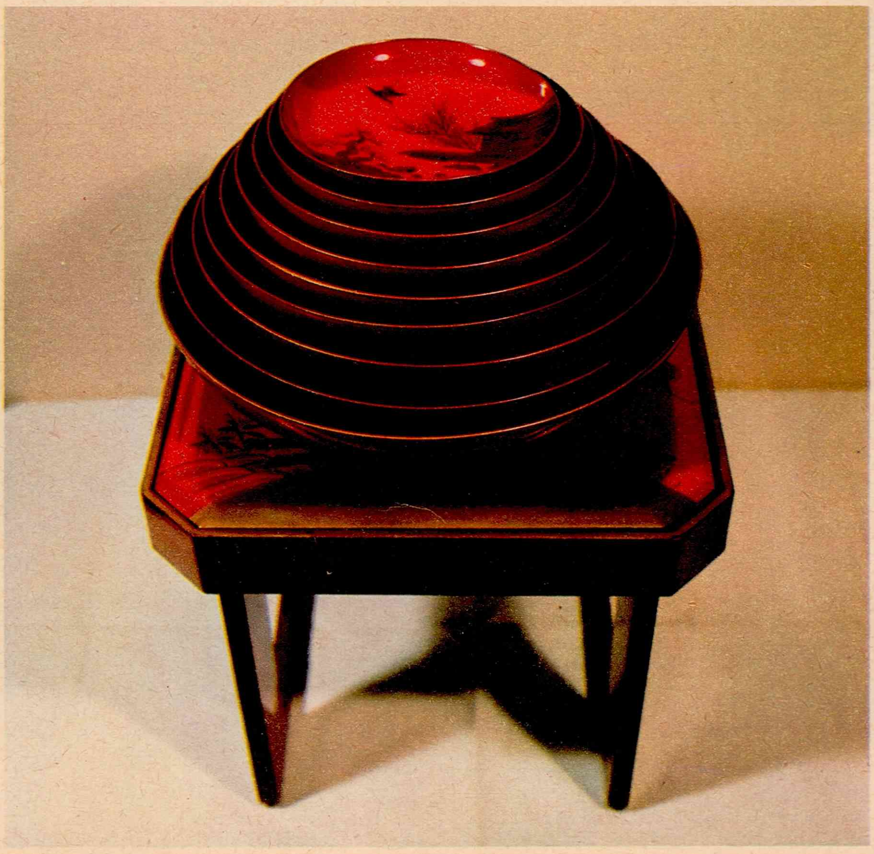




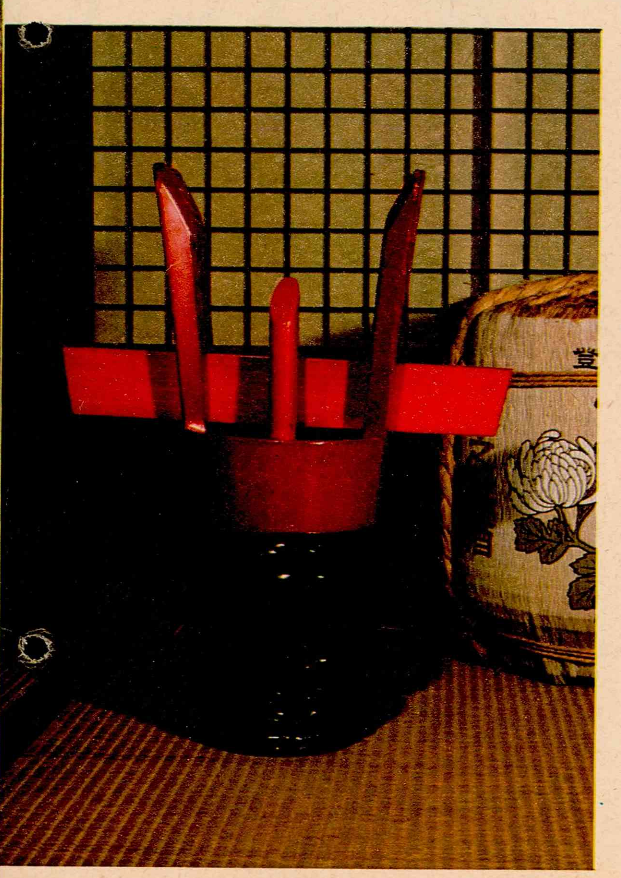
Sake sometimes helps bridge the East-West gap. (Photo by Nobuaki Fukui)







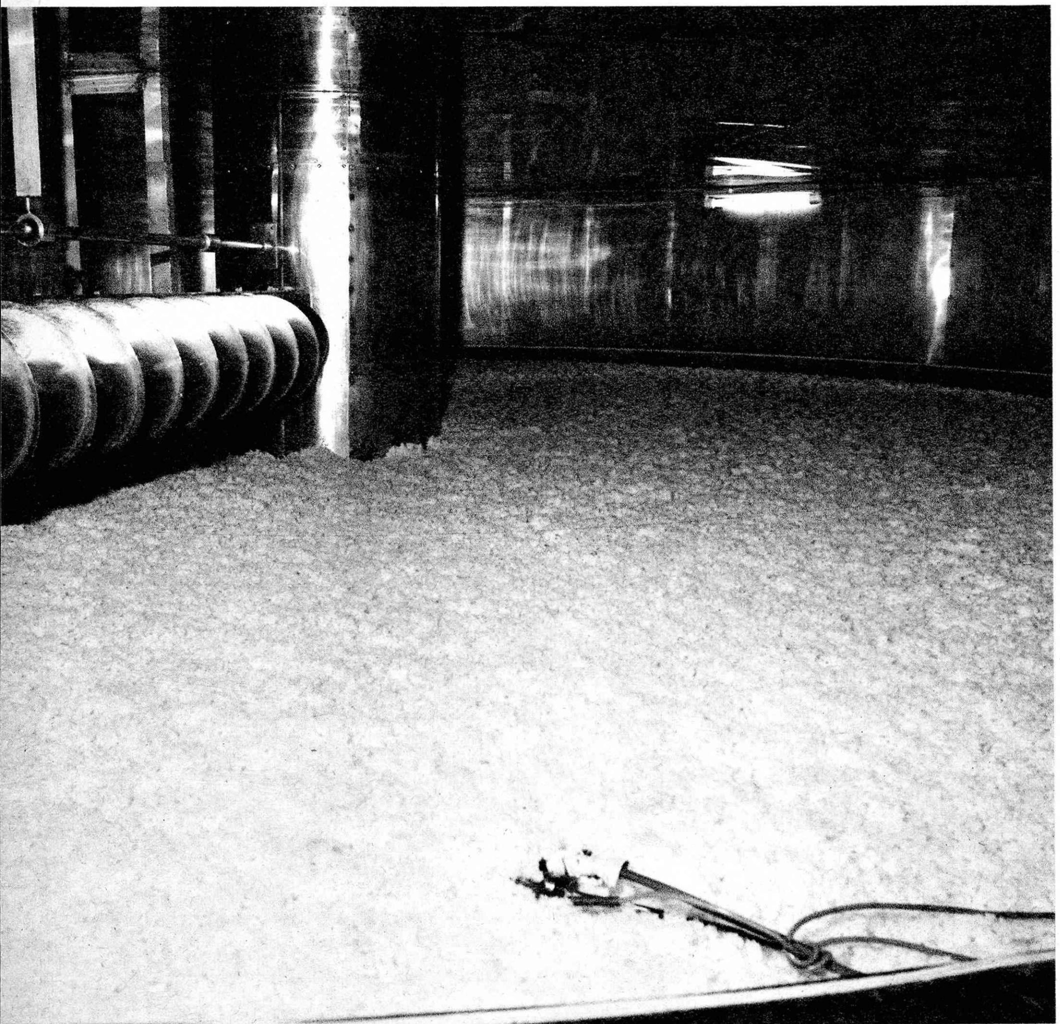




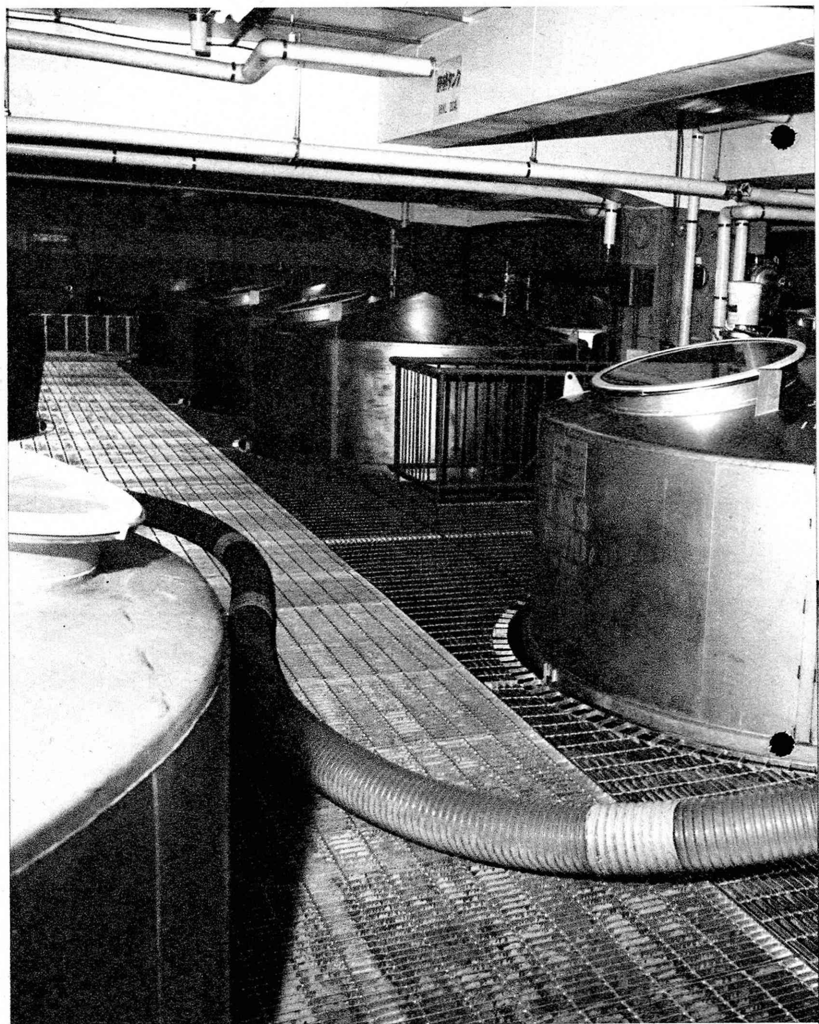


Above: An old sake brewery in Fushimi, a brewing center in the suburbs of Kyoto. Opposite page. Top: An old sake bottle. Below: Sake cups in use in olden times. Bottom left: Lacquered wooden casks. Bottom right: A set of lacquered sake cups for use on ceremonial occasions. Far left: An elaborate lacquered container used on festive occasions. Left: A set of red lacquered cups for Japanese-style wedding ceremony.

Steamed rice is moulded in this room equipped with automatic devices for temperature and moisture control.



This room houses scores of fermentation tanks.



The Brewing Process

There is much mystique about sake and sake brewing. Much of it is imaginary but there is quite a bit of real complexity that is beyond an amateur's comprehension.

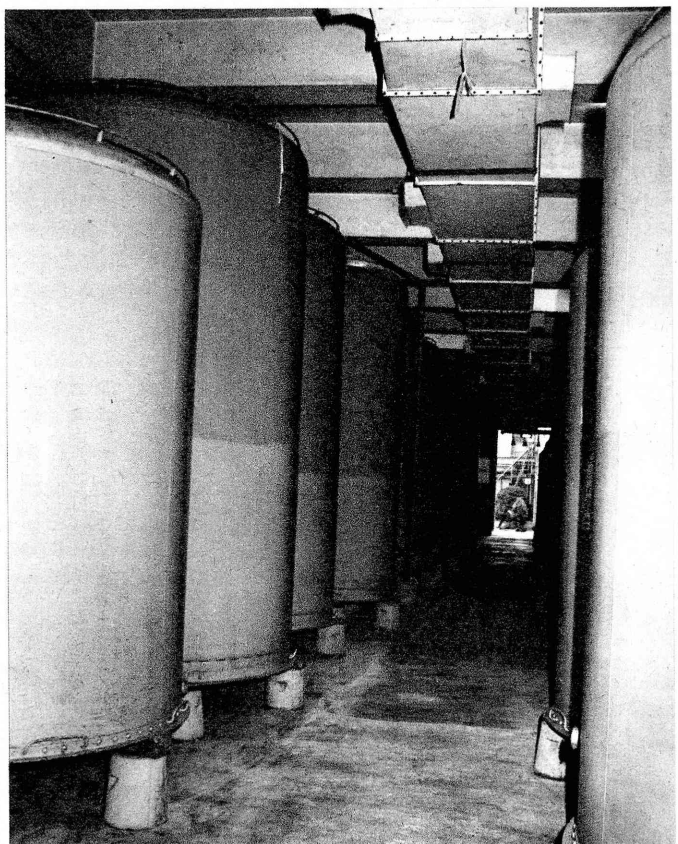
The process of sake brewing starts with polishing choice rice grains. The rice is then washed, soaked in clear water for 12 hours, steamed and cooled. Bulk of the steamed rice goes straight to the fermenting vat or tank.

Meanwhile, a part of it, about 20 per cent, is carried into the moulding room after being mixed with separately cultured yeast. The yeast grows and spreads over the rice while it is kept for about 35 hours at a temperature of about 30 degrees C.

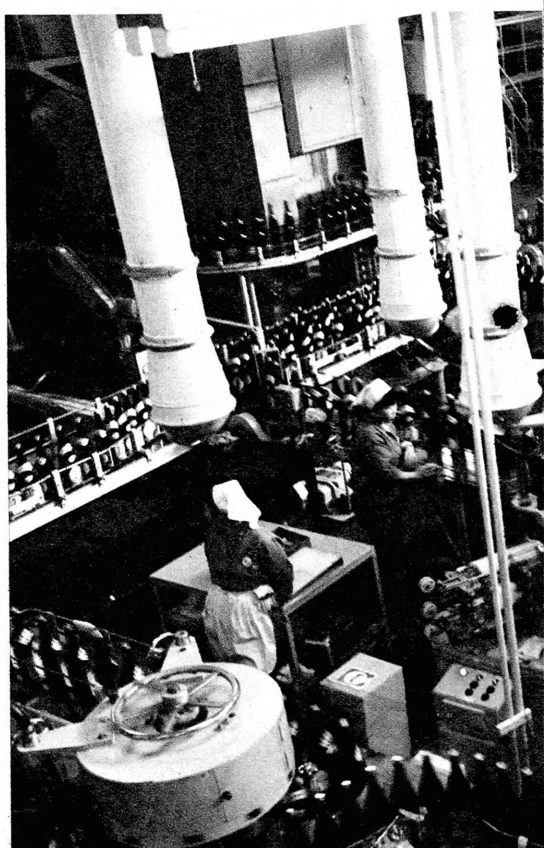
In the meantime, a smaller part, about 8 per cent, of the steamed rice is set aside for culturing yeast. This portion, in a mashy state, ripens in 2-3 weeks.

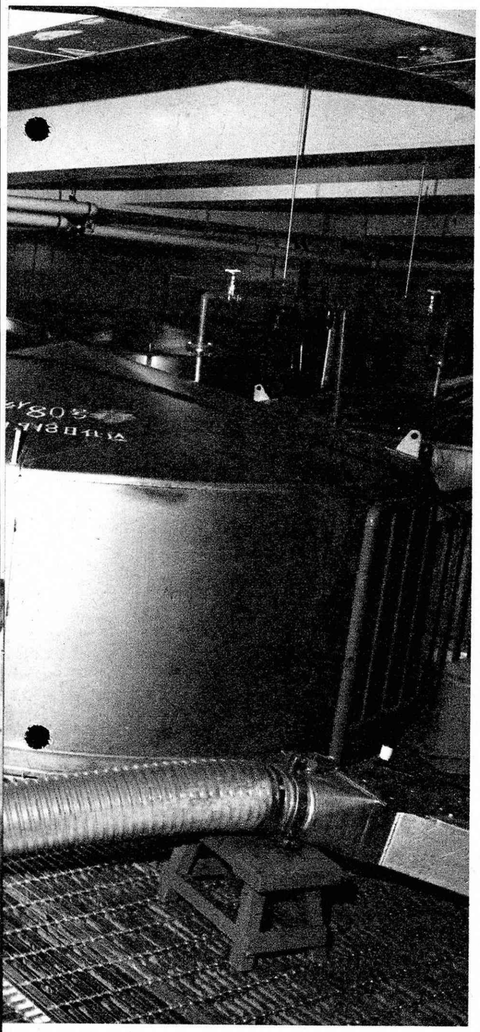
The three ingredients, plus water, are put into fermentation tanks. The mash ripens and turns into sugars. The sugary substance is then transformed by the yeast into alcohol and carbon dioxide. Contrary to popular belief, the fermentation process is quite short—about three weeks. Japanese sake is unique in that saccharization and alcoholization take place simultaneously.

The ripened mash is then filtered. Following sedimenting and heating processes, the unadulterated liquid is pumped into blending tanks where for some grades of sake, sugar, water and alcohol derived from molasses are added to produce the prescribed qualities. The finished product is then put into large storing tanks, ready for bottling and shipment.

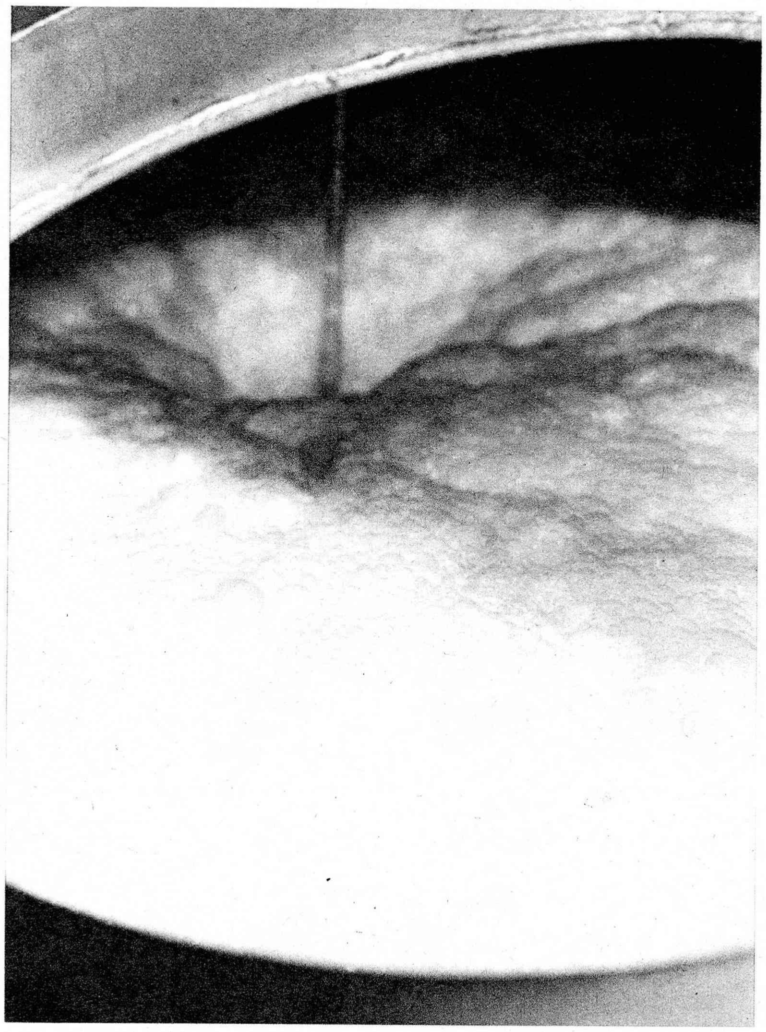


Following sedimenting and pasteurizing process, the clear sake is aged in these storage tanks.



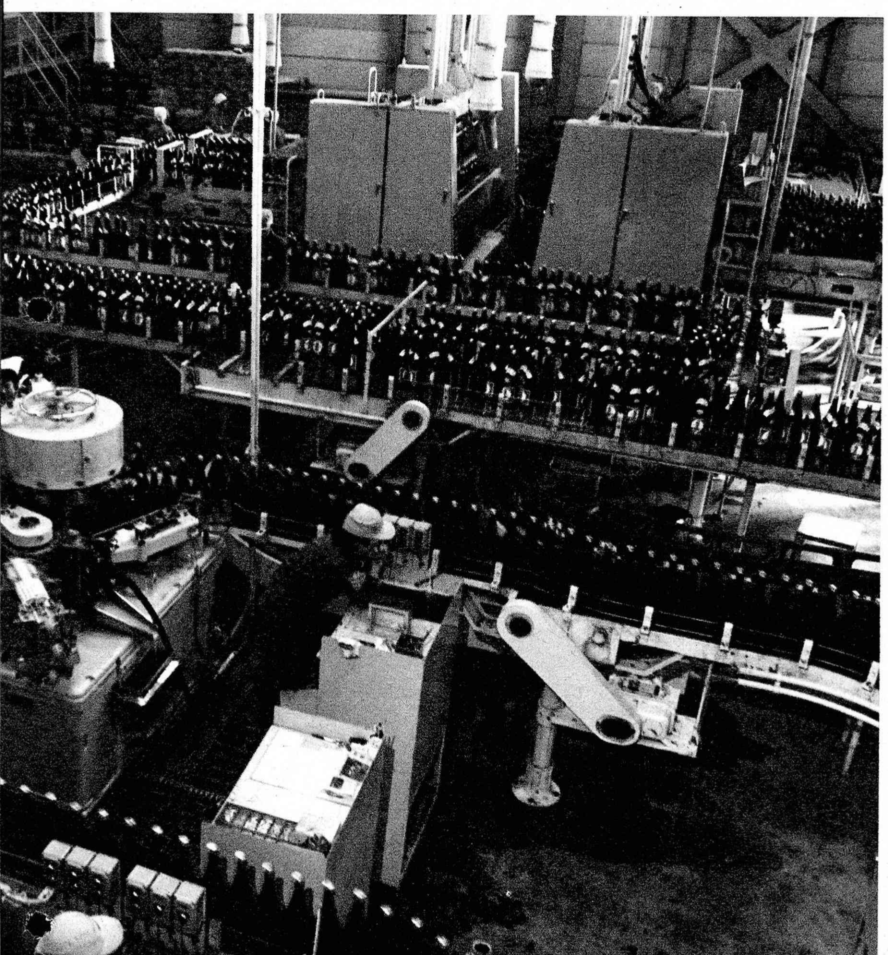


The moulded rice mixed with water is fermented for three weeks.

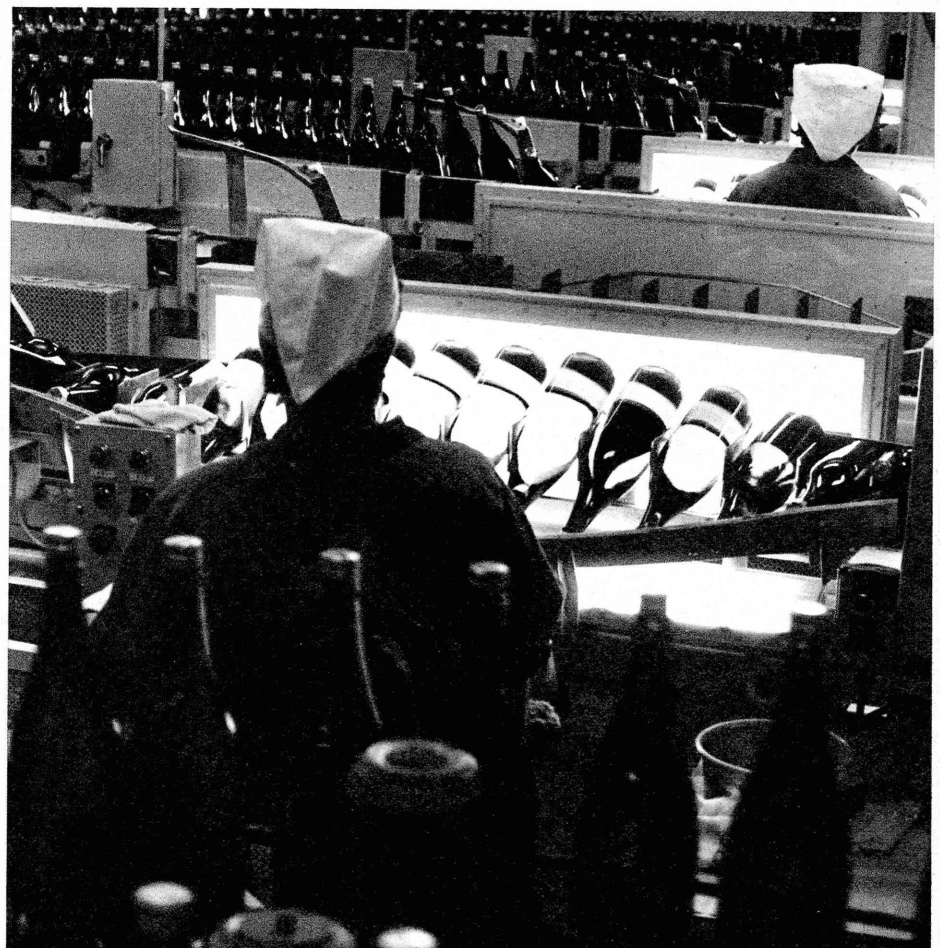


Sake is filtered by this automatic process.





This bottling plant processes 8,000 to 15,000 bottles an hour.



The finished product is bottled and inspected.



Facts & Figures About Sake

There are more than 3,000 sake breweries operating in Japan. They range from giant sake houses with modern automated plants and large work force to those managed by family members and seasonal outside help. Hundreds of these smaller breweries are in the red, according to a recent survey.

Larger breweries are concentrated in two districts, Nada in Hyogo Prefecture and Fushimi in the outskirts of Kyoto. These have been Japan's sake centers for centuries and account for a half of national total production of about 1,650,000 kiloliters (436 million U.S. gallons and 363 million U.K. gallons).

Nada's water is particularly famous as *Miyamizu* and contains an amount of minerals and salt just fit for sake brewing. The chemical contents of this water can be determined by analysis but somehow water of identical quality cannot be made in the laboratories.

For centuries, fermented rice wine has been Japan's undisputed national drink but lately it is steadily losing its ground. The new rivals are beer and whiskey. Since the mid-fifties, beer has been the leading drink in Japan in terms of annual consumption and the gap between the two beverages has been widening year after year.

In the 1974 fiscal year, the Japanese downed 1,649,756 kiloliters of sake and 3,633,104 kiloliters of beer. These translate into twelve 3.83-pint bottles of sake and seventy-seven 1.35-pint bottles of beer—both per adult. Whiskey trails behind with four 1.53-pint bottles. The per capita expenditure for alcoholic drinks was ¥31,144, out of which the Government took ¥10,496 as liquor revenue.

Sake brewers have been fighting this trend desperately. One way is to sell sake in smaller, more convenient containers. Whereas 3.83-pint bottles have been the standard receptacle for sake, we now have a variety of smaller containers with just a cupful. Most are made of glass but there are aluminum cans, plastic bottles and even paper containers!

Another effort is to popularize sake cocktails—sake-based martini, manhattan, collins and even screw driver. The sake martini recipe recommended by sake purveyors is: 1 part sake, 3 parts dry gin. Stir with ice, strain into 3 or 4 oz. cocktail glass, serve with olive.

Sake parties are a popular motif of many old Japanese paintings. A ukiyoe print by Utagawa Toyohiro shown on the opposite page depicts geisha entertainers enjoying themselves in a private shindig one summer evening. The setting is a platform set up along the Kamo River of Kyoto. (By courtesy of Riccar Art Museum)

This is not a scene at a reception. Fushimi's sake brewers recently invited experts, some self-appointed, to a wine-testing session, requiring each to give merit marks for each brand.





A large part of sake is sold in one-sho bottles which hold 1.8 liters (3.83 pints). Lately, however, smaller bottles containing just a cupful each, are becoming increasingly popular.







A sacred straw festoon adorning a brewing plant. It attests to sake brewing's association with Shintoism.

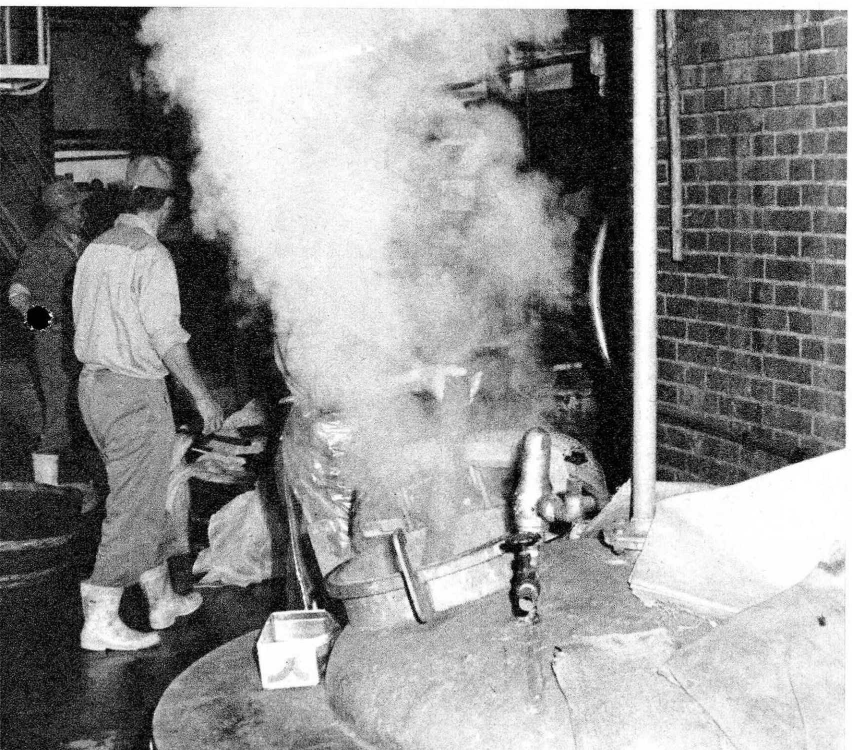




While most sake breweries are becoming modernized, some still stick to old ways.



Far left: Sake breweries in Fushimi, Kyoto, one of Japan's major brewing centers. Left: View of a brewery in Nada, another sake center, with its old well and vats for varying uses.



Cleaned rice is steamed in a giant pressure cooker.



A brewery operative wraps up 5-gallon kegs with straw mat covers.

Dehorning the Deer in Nara

Photos by Japan Illustrated



By Vivienne Kenrick

Proud stags roam about the dehorning arena set up near the Kasuga Shrine, unaware of what awaits them in a few minutes' time.



TWELVE centuries, even though they are pronounced in a single breath, still represent an awesome amount of time. Twelve centuries have passed since Nara was the capital of Japan. Over these hundreds of years, the swirl of life has waltzed away from her, leaving her a staid old lady of a city, placid in a country setting. She tolerates the encroachment of today's irreverent Japan. She has to, yet she does it with grace. Her age is her serenity and security, her dignity her promise of tomorrow.

On the Sanjo-dori approach to Nara Park, it is not hard to picture the old time. Consciousness of the grandeur that was Nara pervades even today's shopping street. It's in the air. Perhaps not every passer-by could recite off-hand what were Nara's remarkable achievements twelve centuries ago. He might not be able to say positively that the nation's first history and first mythological chronicle were written then, that the first poetry anthology was compiled and the first geographical survey conducted. But he knows with certainty that Nara, during her China-influenced golden age, forged much that was magnificent and enduring. Back from the main Sanjo-dori shopping street, where shops specialize in superior wood carvings, deer horn novelties and photographs of local art treasures, traditional old houses live on in pride. That's it: this ancient neighborhood is steeped in pride, unassailable.

The road through Nara Park, the legacy of old Nara, goes past Sarusawa Pond that observes, in autumn, a picturesque festival. On the night of the full moon, musicians sail a huge fan, taller than a man, in a boat across the pond, then float it on the water. Is autumn the season, then, to see the best of old Nara?

Autumn aficionados would say yes. Autumn is the season when white dust gently stirs, when yellow gingko trees drip their leaves and the sky lifts in peerless blue. Then, at dusk, where gloom deepens under the interlacing branches of huge cryptomeria in the park, deer merge with the shadows, separate, and merge again. Stately fellows, these. Messengers of the deities, mounts of the deities in time past, they wander at will around temple and shrine precincts, and throughout the deer park. They, too, have dignity, unchallengeable. In repose they hold themselves as still as carven images, unreal among the trees and stone lanterns.

Beyond red *torii,* stone steps lead up to Kasuga Shrine. Twelve centuries — how many feet have trodden these cobbles, and how many more will come? They could hardly be the original steps; but those stone lanterns, green with moss, could well have lit the approaches to the shrine for a millenium of Japanese festivals. In the twilight, the weird whistling cries of the deer sound through the dark, quiet woods: eerie, other-worldly.

Vermilion and white buildings of Kasuga Shrine, and the dark shingle of its roofs, startle the green of the surroundings. Rows of bronze lanterns hang along the shrine's long corridors, like old-fashioned pendants dangling on chains. Kasuga with four god guardians is the ancestral shrine of the great Fujiwara family of the 8th century. All its bronze lanterns, nearly 3,000 of them, are lit twice a year to illuminate festivals of February and August.

Imagine the mauve of Maytime when wistaria is in flower! The thick cords of great, writhing vines twine around supports that man has provided, and around natural ones that they have found for themselves. Is spring the best season, then? Or could it be winter when the hillside of Wakakusa-yama goes up in flames, burning the grass in a ceremonial flamboyance? Or isn't it summer when rice is planted out in the rain, and wild lilies steal a festival theme, and people dance their old folk dances? But in the time of maples, colored leaves burnish the hills, and bright globes of orange persimmon speckle grey tiles of roofs. After all, does autumn win?

Paper prayers, tied on trees, turn them white. Logs and tree stumps in the woods serve as rustic benches. Secluded temples and shrines populate the shrouded woods, that whisper with mystery. On mad March nights, young priests brandishing torches of fire run along the high corridors of Nigatsudo — February Hall. This ritual celebrates the Water-drawing Festival, a religious ceremony of exorcism. Spring then? But no. Gathering dusk in autumn holds the quintessence of Nara, ancient capital in Central Japan. The high platform of Nigatsudo commands the last light hesitating over the tree tops. Everything is here: the panorama of curving, tip-tilted grey roofs of temples, the gold of a rice harvest still ungathered; the distant five layers of Kofukuji Pagoda, the two golden horns on the roof of the temple of the Great Buddha; the scarlet in maple, the orange in persimmon. The moment is one to hold, to wish on, to expand into forever.

Yet the moment passes, as moments must. Another enchantment awaits at the foot of Nigatsudo. White plaster walls with their own little tiled roofs enclose, in an old-world country lane, the houses and gardens of priests and retainers. Lower down the lane is the belfry of Todaiji and the bell, both national treasures. And eventually, in command of its setting, is the biggest wooden building under one roof in the world, the Hall of the Great Buddha; and its precious consignment, the biggest bronze statue in the world.

Nara has more, much more, that is still superlative. Nandaimon, the largest gate in the world, encloses two guardian figures that are the largest in Japan. The five-story pagoda of Kofukuji falls slightly short of the superlative: it is only the second highest in Japan. Shosoin, the log cabin treasure house of Todaiji, is beyond superlatives, in a class of its own, simple in form, efficient in function. Shosoin has preserved an interior constancy of temperature and humidity to protect, over twelve centuries, the Imperial Household's Treasures. These treasures comprise about 9,000 priceless artifacts, many of them dating back to the 7th century. Once a year the Shosoin treasures are aired, and some are then placed on display in Nara's National Museum. Once a year, when? In autumn.

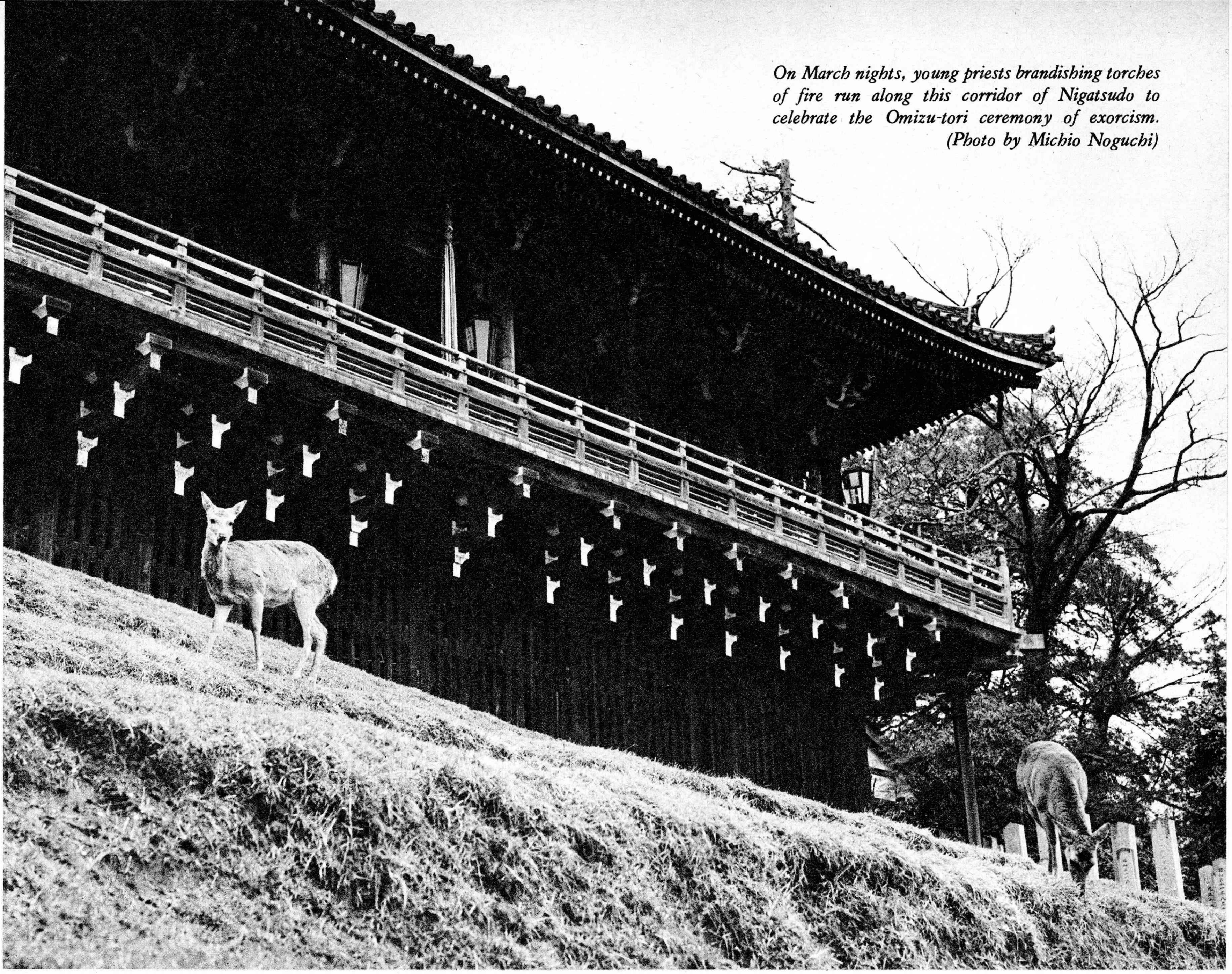
NARA festivals fill the calendar year round, with autumn scoring again. It is in October that the majestic deer are rounded up for dehorning. Autumn, "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness," brings the earthly mating season to sacred deer, making the temper of the arrogant male unsteady and confirming the threat in his antlers. In the interests of safety, and to keep tourist shops supplied with deer horn, those heavy, branching antlers have to go.

The dehorning ceremony at Kasuga Shrine follows a ritual that has been observed for 300 years. An arena is prepared, and beaters wearing *happi* coats wait inside its boundaries. Attendants drive two or three deer at a time into the arena. Suspicious and by no means trusting, they run, halt, look around. A drummer, wise man, sits out of harm's way on a platform built in a tree in the ring. The beaters whoop, flourish bamboo rods and rings and rope lassos, and chase the deer around the arena. Excitement rises as the drummer bangs a frenzy out of his drum. A robed priest shows himself to be another wise man as he puts the tree between himself and the deer whenever they charge his way.

A lasso falls neatly over antlers. The successful beater hangs on, tightening the knot. His companions close in to bring the struggling beast to the ground and immobilize it. Surely this is no way to treat a sacred creature. Amends have to be made. While two men stretch a banner across the arena to corral the deer still uncaught, someone lays a straw mat and places a pillow on it. The beaters ceremoniously position the captured animal. Someone carries a water pot, to tip a drink over a lolling tongue. Someone folds the ear down over the frantic eye. The priest comes out from behind the tree, kneels, and saws through the branching antlers. It takes him only seconds to perform the operation. The released deer springs to his feet and stands uncertain, bewildered at the sudden strange lightness of his head. Shorn of horns, weapons and pride, he bounds away out into the park again, to liberty and the reassurance of the good deer life.

A beater delivers the severed antlers to the god of Kasuga Shrine, placing them before an immaculate altar already set with fruit, rice wine and leaves. The others return to the chase. One beater tries for a prize by grabbing at the horns of a deer as it races past, trying to capture him and bring him down with just his bare hands.

The day trembles into evening. People depart. At freedom in Nara Park, the deer return to their own old pursuits. They call to each other in the sheltering dark woods that for centuries have harbored their kind and echoed with their cries. Perhaps in their cries the deer relay the messages of the gods. Perhaps in the night, when no mortal is around, those ancient gods come back to Nara and, sportive, ride their deer again under the trees.



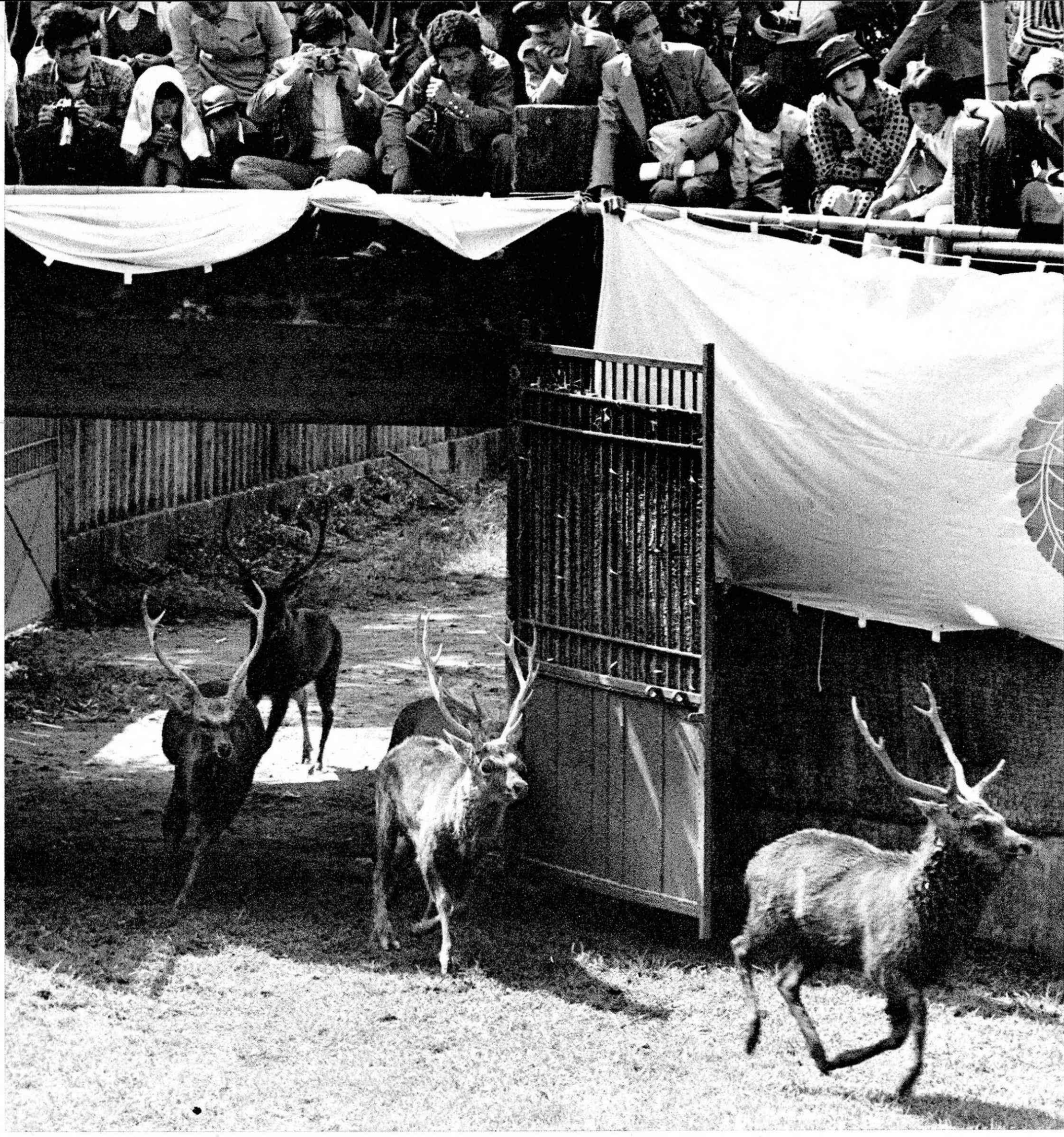
On March nights, young priests brandishing torches of fire run along this corridor of Nigatsudo to celebrate the Omizu-tori ceremony of exorcism. (Photo by Michio Noguchi)



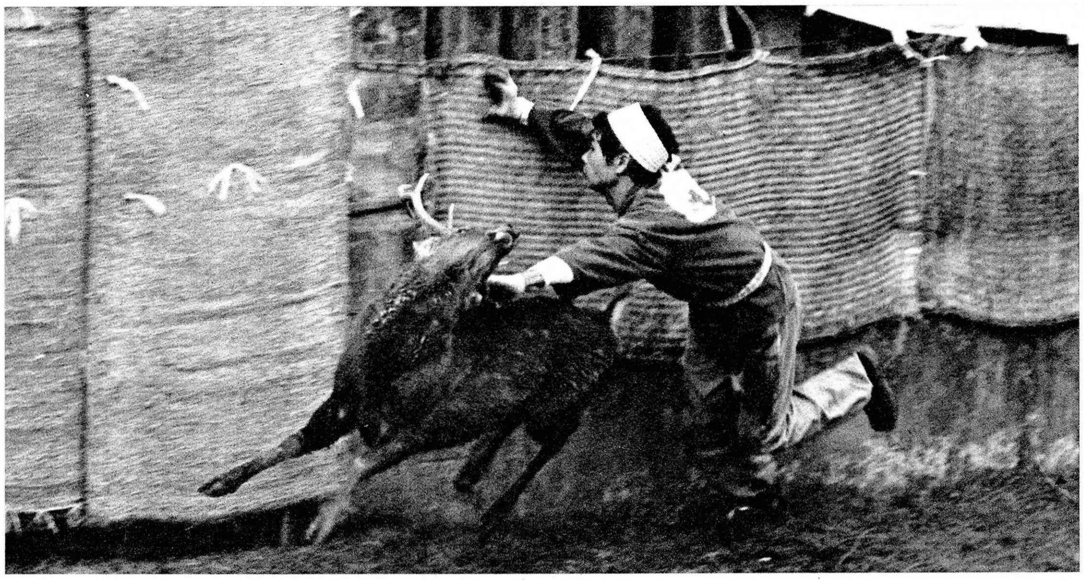
These stone lanterns dedicated to the Kasuga Shrine feature images of deer—one a doe and the other a stag.



The saw, ropes and other instruments for deer dehorning are purified by Shinto priests before the ritual begins.

















Counter-clockwise:

Deer, captured and held in custody beforehand, are driven into the arena for the dehorning operation.

A valiant beater tries to grab at the horns of a galloping deer. If he succeeds, he can expect a special prize.

Beaters try to bring the lassoed stag to the tree under which the dehorning ritual is performed.

An intrepid young man brings a stag down with his bare hands.

The antlers, newly cut by the priest, are placed before the altar.

A robed priest saws through the branching antlers of the prostrate stag as beaters hold it down.

The Good Luck

In November every year, people of the Tokyo region observe the Bird Fair — a Shinto festival for invoking divine providence for good fortune in general and good business in particular. The observance takes place at shrines dedicated to the spirit of the Big Bird or eagle. It is held on the Day of the Bird, or Cock, the 10th sign in the Japanese zodiac.

As the Japanese calendar is tied to the zodiac, each day of the year is made to correspond with one of the 12 signs of the zodiac cycle, which means that the Day of the Cock comes around every 12 days. Thus *Tori-no-Ichi* (the Bird Fair) is held at least twice, or sometimes thrice, in November. There is a superstition that when there are three Cock days in the month, as it was the case last year, the coming winter will bring many fires.

Of the many shrines whose messenger is considered to be the Big Bird, the most popular is the Otori (lit. Big Bird) Shrine in Taito Ward of Tokyo. The chief feature of this festival is the sale of bamboo rakes — instruments believed to help the faithful rake in good fortune. These are sold at stalls set up along the approach to the shrine.

The rakes are decorated with all manner of lucky omens: images of the Gods of Good Fortune, lucky animals such as the crane and tortoise, miniature rice-bales, the three auspicious plants of bamboo, pine and plum, imitation gold coins, the mask of a plump, smiling woman (*Okame*) long considered a symbol of good luck.

As the fair is opened with the beating of the drum at twelve midnight sharp, worshippers surge up to the sanctuary to offer prayers and then turn around toward the shrine office where attendants dispense amulets made in the shape of miniature bamboo rakes. And on their way home, they purchase the decorative rakes at the roadside bazaar. One will find these symbols of good business, usually large models, on the walls of shops and restaurants.

The flow of worshippers continues all day long and well into the late hours of the evening. Special traffic control is enforced around the Otori Shrine on that festival day. The scene is duplicated at other shrines dedicated to the deity of Big Bird.

Tori-no-Ichi is also an occasion for the sale of all manner of articles, ranging from shrubs and plants to household utensils.

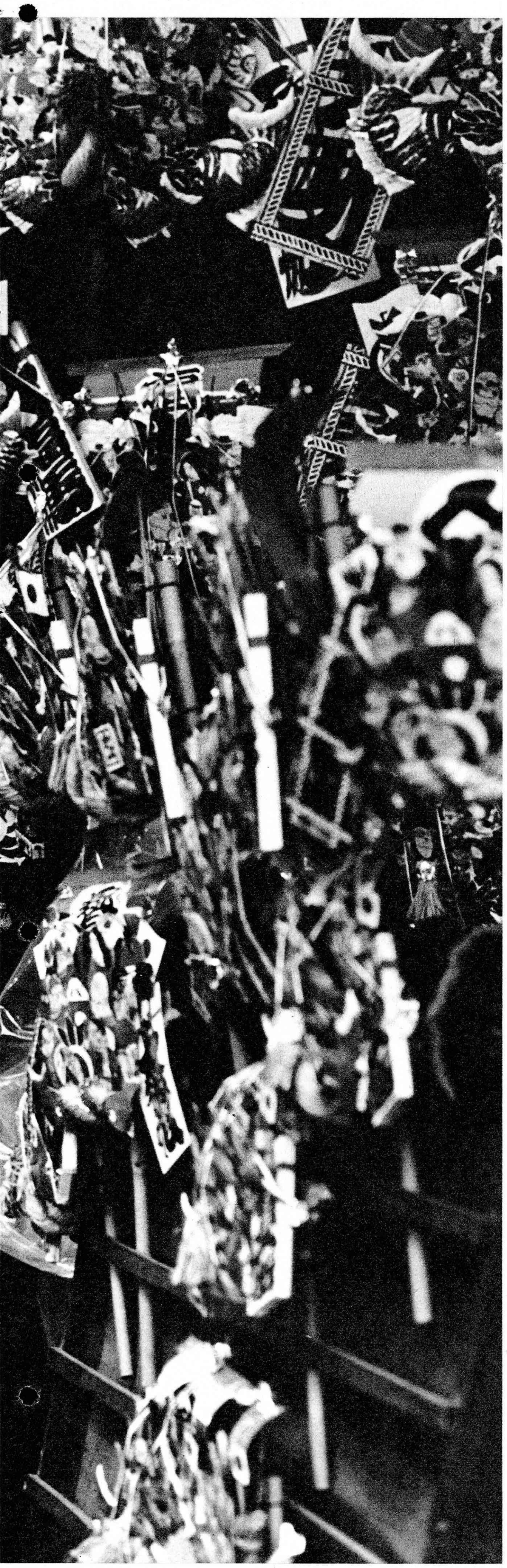
The Otori Shrine was originally dedicated to the deity of the fortune of war. As its annual festival was held in late autumn, the season of falling leaves, rakes were sold to meet the practical needs of the people. It is believed that later some imaginative entrepreneurs developed the lowly utensil into a popular symbol of prosperity.

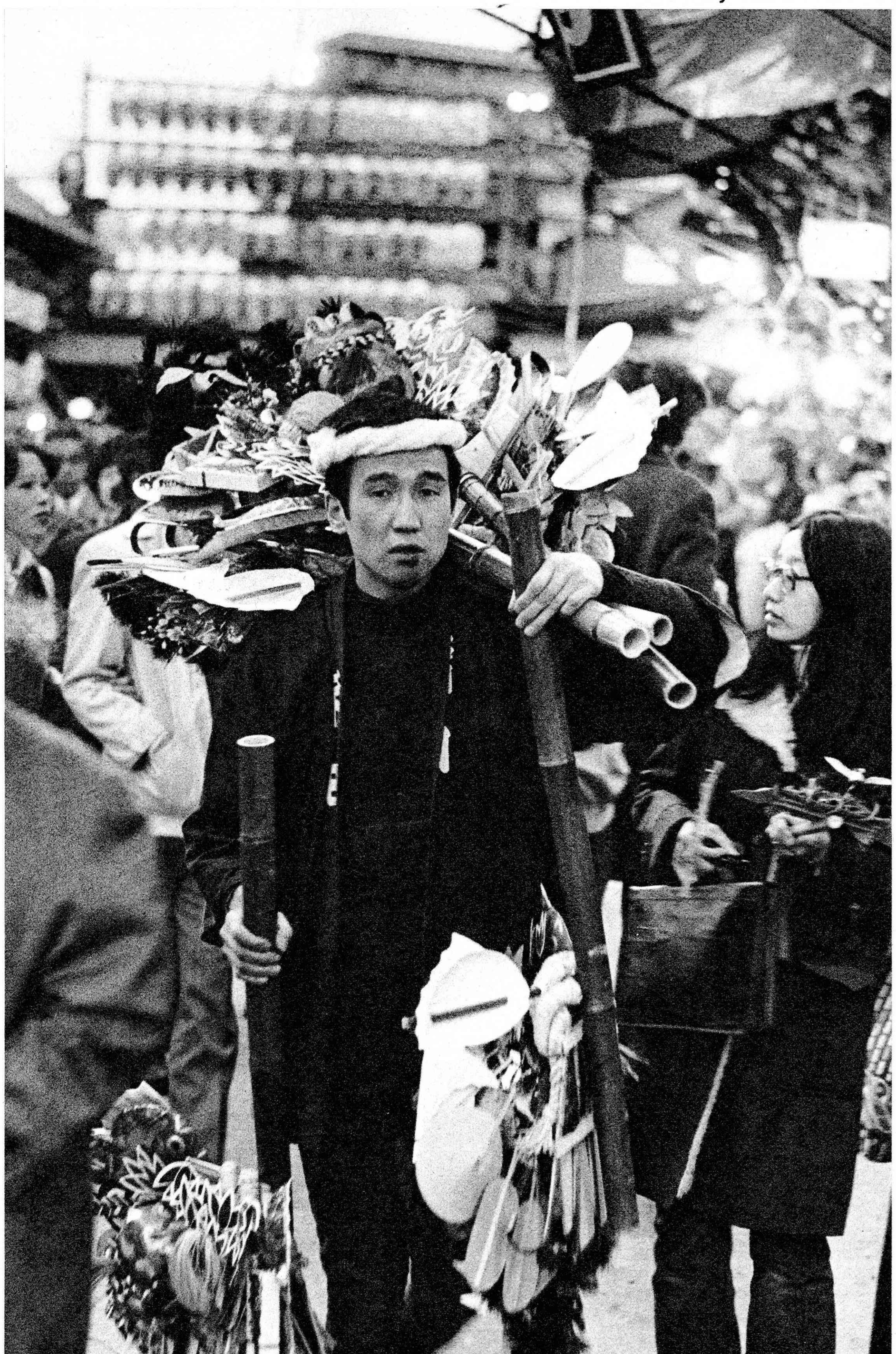


Right: A cute salesperson in old-style fire fighter's garb hawks good luck rakes, ranging in size from 3 inches to 3 feet.

Festival

Photos by Toru Mizuno





A happy shopper heads home with his Bird Fair purchases.







Top: This shop seems to be aiming at the economy-minded shoppers. Above: Happy mood permeates the Bird Fair bazaar.



The name of a French pastry shop is found among the "Sold" labels.

Gossamer Lights of Gifu



"I'VE painted this design so many times, my hand moves by itself," said Tokio Kato as each dab of paint he applied somehow developed of its own accord into a graceful bellflower or rose of Sharon. He was working on a lantern covered with diaphanous light-green paper. Little by little around it grew a delicate scene of flowers and grasses that when later lit by candle light would give the impression of a meadow touched by the first rays of morning sun.

Although paper lanterns have been in use in this country for nearly a thousand years, the familiar collapsible kind called here *chochin* — but known everywhere else as Japanese lanterns — only appeared in the 16th century. There were many varieties: some to brighten up outdoor festivals, some to display in front of a restaurant, others to light the way home. In shape they were generally round, prolate, or cylindrical. But the *chochin* Tokio Kato paints are one of a kind. Made only in the city of Gifu, they are called quite simply Gifu *chochin*. Unlike other *chochin,* they are oval, and their sole purpose is to be beautiful. Hanging on the veranda or placed in the sitting room on a summer evening, Gifu *chochin* are meant to convey an atmosphere of calm and coolness as the candle flickers faintly through the pastel tints.

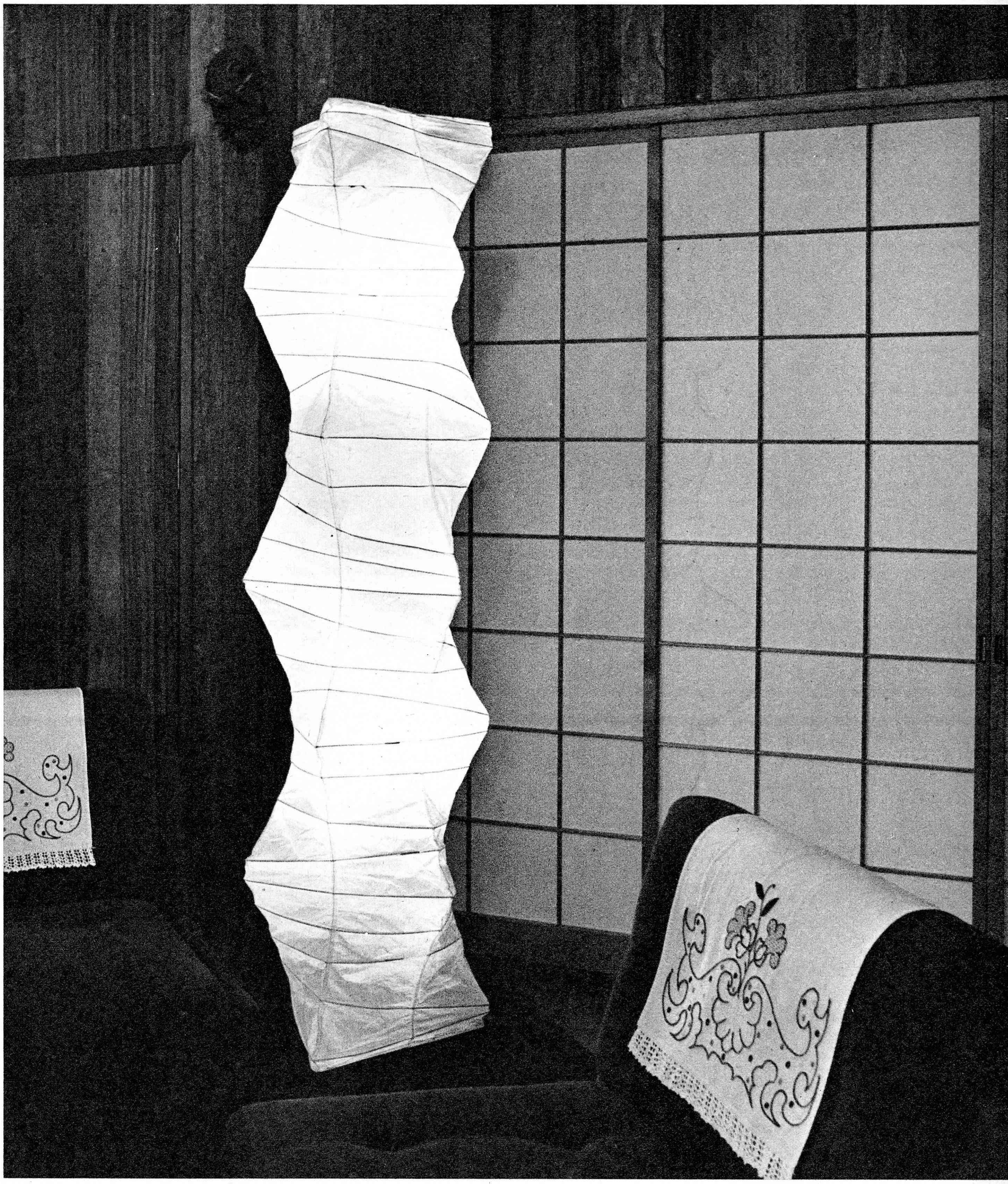
Despite the notions fostered by travel posters or outdated books that Japan is a land of lanterns, actually the only one likely to be found in the average home nowadays is this Gifu *chochin*. In fact, it is so well-known that the mention of Gifu brings to mind *chochin* and vice-versa. Yet a hundred or so years ago, few people had ever heard of this unusual lantern. The reason was simple enough. To transport the lanterns to Kyoto required a journey by horse cart to Ogaki, then by foot to the port of Nagahama from where a boat went to Otsu. Then it was another trek on foot to the final destination. That all changed when Tokyo and Kyoto were linked by the Tokaido Line railroad in 1889. Gifu, halfway between both points, was in a very advantageous position.

Then in 1891, a disastrous earthquake razed the city. The spirit of re-building the city seems to have

By Patricia Massy
Photos by Michio Noguchi

Below left: Dozens of combinations of meadow flowers and grasses flow effortlessly from the brush of the chochin painter. Below: A twist of the imagination and paper produces a three-dimensional form as this "luminous sculpture" designed by Isamu Noguchi.





affected the *chochin* too. Various new shapes were created. To improve the rate of production, the famous stencil cutters of Ise were employed to transfer the floral designs into stencils so fine that they appear at first glance to be hand painted. The magnificent lanterns resting on three legs (cat's feet is the literal term) also date from this period. Most of these innovations originated with an enterprising lantern dealer by the name of Jishichi Ozeki who virtually developed lantern making into the industry it is today. His son Tameshiro is the present head of the Ozeki firm. A youthful 83 years of age, he has seen Gifu *chochin* right into modern times with the conversion of *chochin* into lamp shades for electric lights.

Nowadays it seems so obviously appropriate to have a globe of paper as a lamp in the sitting room that it comes as a surprise to learn that the idea was initially met with skepticism and ridicule. Perhaps if the creative genius behind the idea had not been the internationally famous sculptor Isamu Noguchi, the inherent potentials of paper lanterns might never have developed and they would still be no more than festive decorations.

It all started in 1951 when Noguchi chanced to visit the Ozeki workshop. A long dormant interest in the possibilities of shaping paper sprang to life. With Ozeki's cooperation, he began experimenting with "luminous sculptures." Instead of the transparent tissue paper that had been used since the late 19th century, he chose the original sturdy white papers hand-made nearby at Mino. The wooden rims at top and bottom were eliminated so that the paper could describe its own independent form. In order to distinguish these new lamps from *chochin*, they were called *Akari*, meaning light.

However, when the first examples were brought to the big department stores in Tokyo, no one wanted to have anything to do with them. White *chochin* with no decoration? That sort of thing is only for cemeteries. Who wants to be reminded of funerals! It was an understandable reaction. Ghosts are supposed to carry tattered white *chochin*, and if you have ever seen a Japanese horror film, you will admit that white *chochin* can be quite spooky. So



Above: Unique to Gifu chochin is the technique of spiraling the ribs around a frame instead of making individual hoops.





Like the paper bathysphere (above left) and twisted pillars (above), Akari lamps on order from an American department store take shape at the Ozeki workshop.

while in this country Noguchi's *Akari* lamps were considered unconventional, abroad their beauty was immediately recognized. It is only in recent years, as former superstitions have slowly disappeared, that they are gaining popularity here too.

Another attitude Ozeki would like to see change is the association of Gifu *chochin* with the Bon festival. Occurring in July or August depending on the district, it is a Buddhist version of All Saints' Day when the ancestral spirits are welcomed home for a week's reunion with the family. Traditionally a lantern is provided to guide them to the right house. During the past war, when so many were grieving for loved ones, people wanted to have an especially good *chochin*. They chose Gifu *chochin* which were a rather expensive summer decoration enjoyed by wealthy households. Since the custom has stayed, Gifu *chochin* are now thought appropriate only for the Bon season. Therefore, the rest of the year when there is no demand, Ozeki is busy stockpiling for those two or three weeks in summer of hectic sales.

ONE only begins to realize the extent of the lantern's popularity when one visits the company's work rooms. On the third floor are craftsmen like the painter of flowers and grasses. A group of women are stenciling a similar design on to fine paper. Others are pasting the paper to the bamboo frame so neatly that each line of the design meets perfectly at the seams.

One young man is working on a huge *Akari* globe. "Oh, it's really not different from making a small one," he laughed. "Last week we made one so big it had to be suspended from the ceiling." He applied rice paste to one section of the frame with a wide brush, laid a large sheet of paper over it, smoothed it down, and then deftly cut off the excess overlap with a razor. "Not cutting through the other side — that's probably the most difficult part," he said. "And wrapping the bamboo ribs around the form. You can't pull too tight or the sides will be square instead of round. If you are too slack, the paper will buckle."





Above: Diaphanous bubbles that seem to have been born of a fairy tale receive a spray of flowers from the brush of Tokio Kato. Left: Infinite care is taken with every part of the Gifu chochin. Here the lacquered leg of a standing lantern is painted with garlands of gold and silver chrysanthemums.



Right: Sheet by fragile sheet, Isao Hayakawa carefully applies stenciled tissue paper to the bamboo rib framework. Completed chochin dry upside down beside her on the airy veranda.





Lacquering the wooden supports for the standing lanterns, Kiyomitsu Shinoda is as careful as if his name were to be signed to every one, although his work will later be obscured by the profuse floral designs.

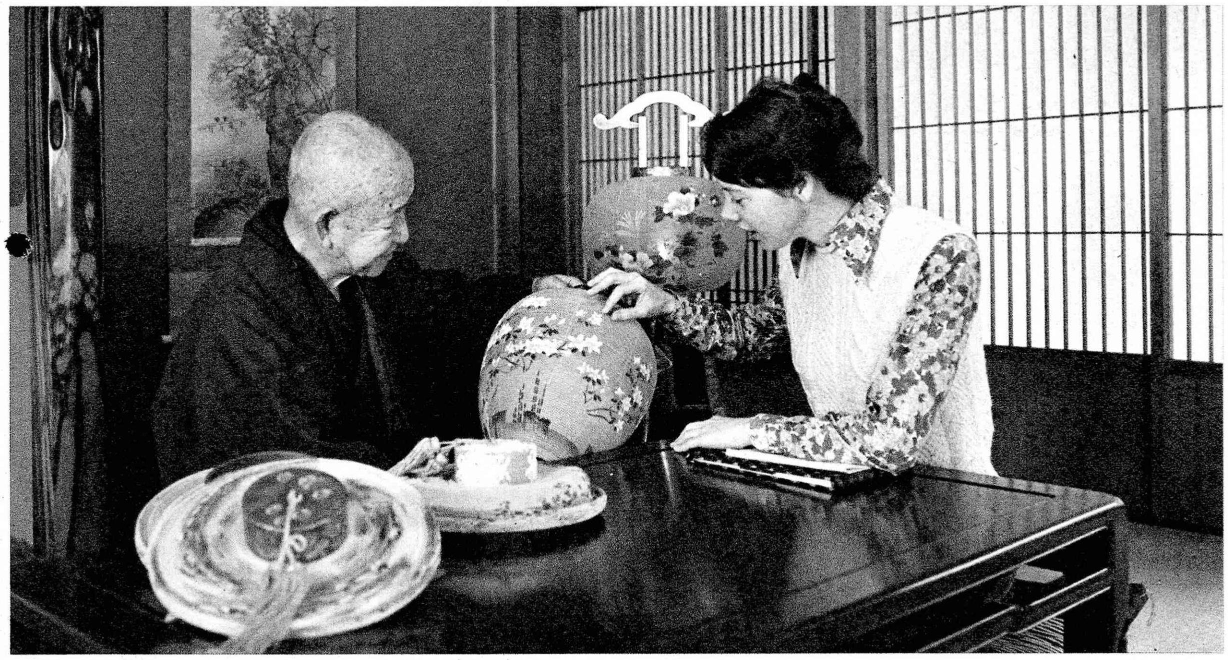
He was talking about the unique rib construction of Gifu *chocin.* All other *chochin* are made of separate hoops. Here one long strip of bamboo is spiraled around the revolving form. This method is much quicker and stronger — should the paper tear, the lantern will still hold together and can be easily patched. When the paper is dry, the wooden form is taken apart and extracted from the inside of the lantern. Then the lantern is ready to be taken to the second floor which is full of people assembling the rims and accessories, checking for faults, and packing.

But what one sees in these work rooms is only about 10 per cent of the company's production. In 70 houses scattered in and around Gifu, people such as Isao Hayakawa are working at home. Eighty years old, she papers 10 to 15 *chochin* a day, and says it is much more interesting than staring at the T.V.

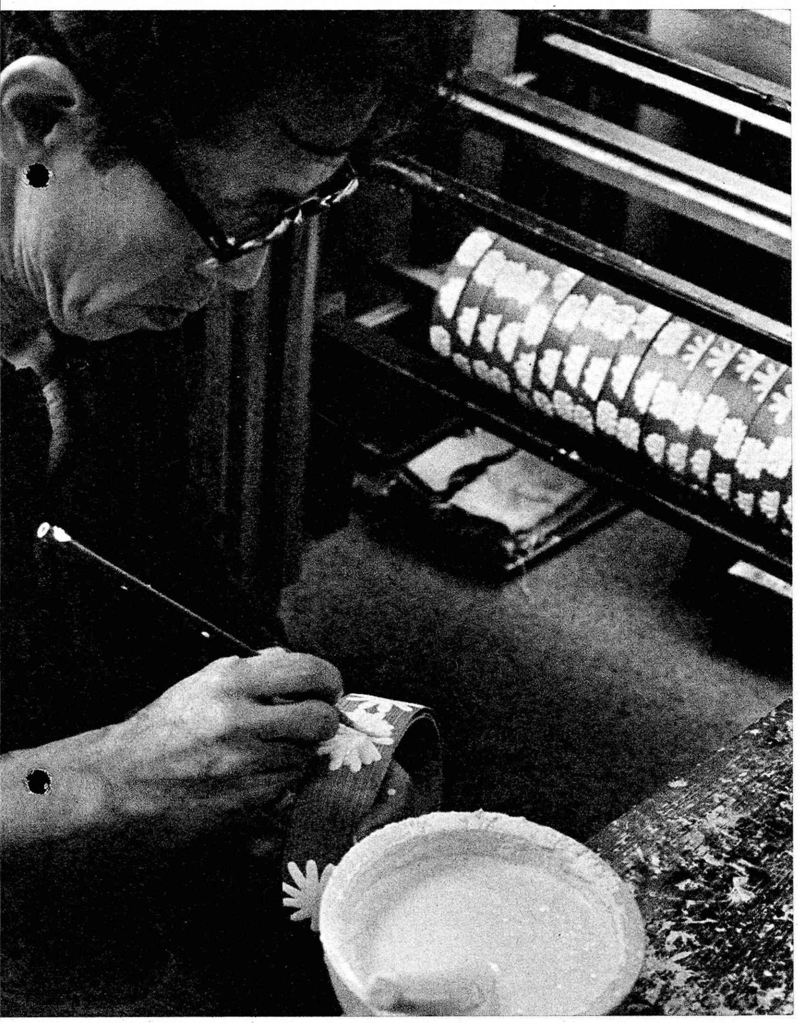
There are also professional craftsmen like Kiyomitsu Shinoda who lacquers the stands for the *ouchi andon*, the lanterns supported on legs. Since he was 15, he has repeated over and over again the time-consuming applications of foundation, color, lacquer and all the minute steps that go in-between. To avoid dust marring the lacquer, he spends his days in a dark, windowless room. Yet his eyes sparkle as he tells of his special way of keeping the lacquer from forming drips on the leg edges. "And I always test my lacquer beforehand," he adds. "Each batch is different, you know, and I want to know how to handle it so it will give a smooth finish."

Over the lacquer background another artisan will stencil designs of autumn flowers in gold and silver, adding metallic dust and sparkles to the center of the flowers. Formerly, because Gifu *chochin* were luxury lanterns, as much care was taken with the rims and feet as any art object. Greatly valued now, old *chochin* are sometimes brought in for re-papering. But the faster production today has brought the price down so that anyone may enjoy a Gifu *chochin* in his home.

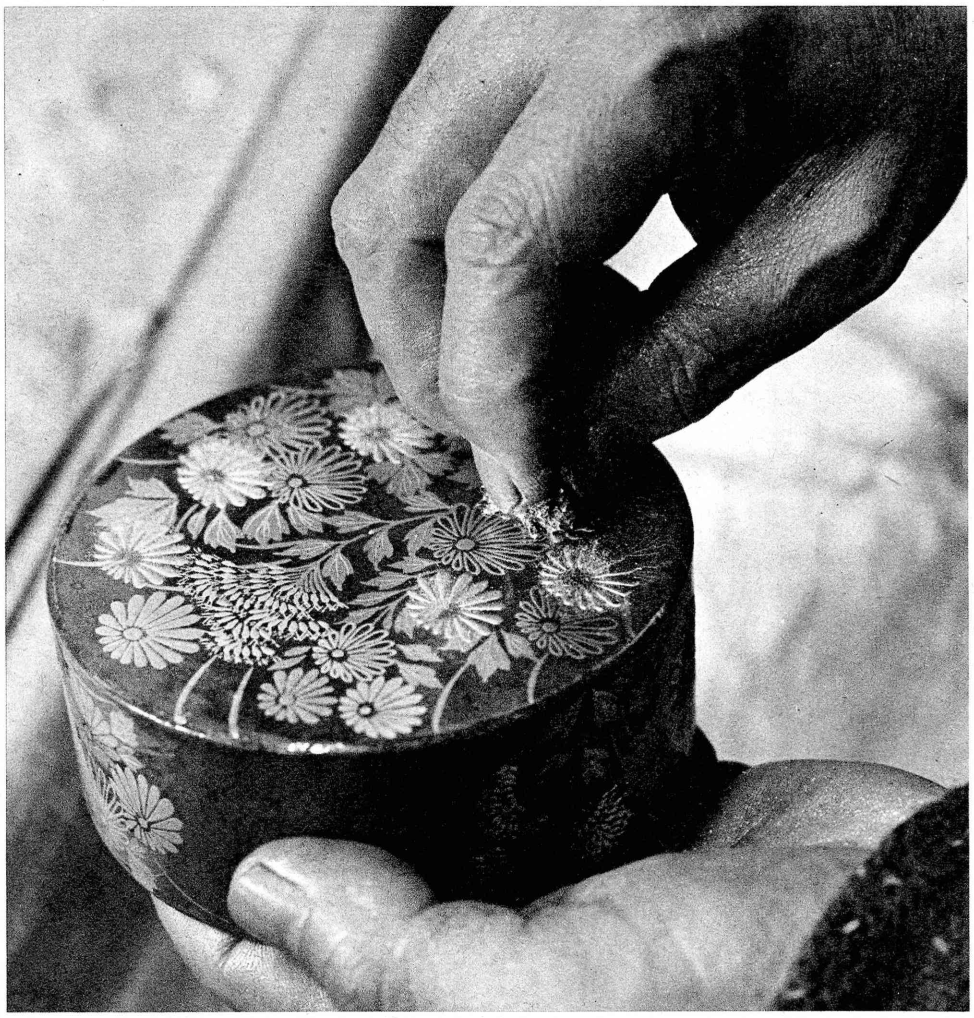
Another type of rim is decorated with raised chrysanthemums on the plain wood, and this still



Left: Tameshiro Ozeki, at 83 still energetically visiting the Ozeki office every day, here is seen at his home discussing the various designs of Gifu chochin with the author.



White chrysanthemums on simple wood are an alternative to the elaborately lacquered rims. Forty years of skill rest in the hands of Kazuo Miyazaki.

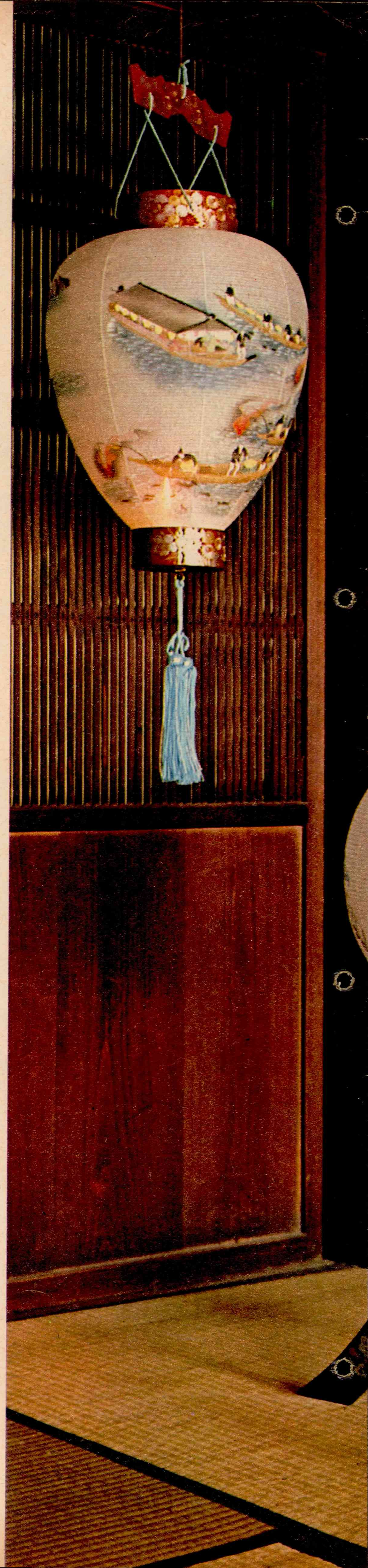


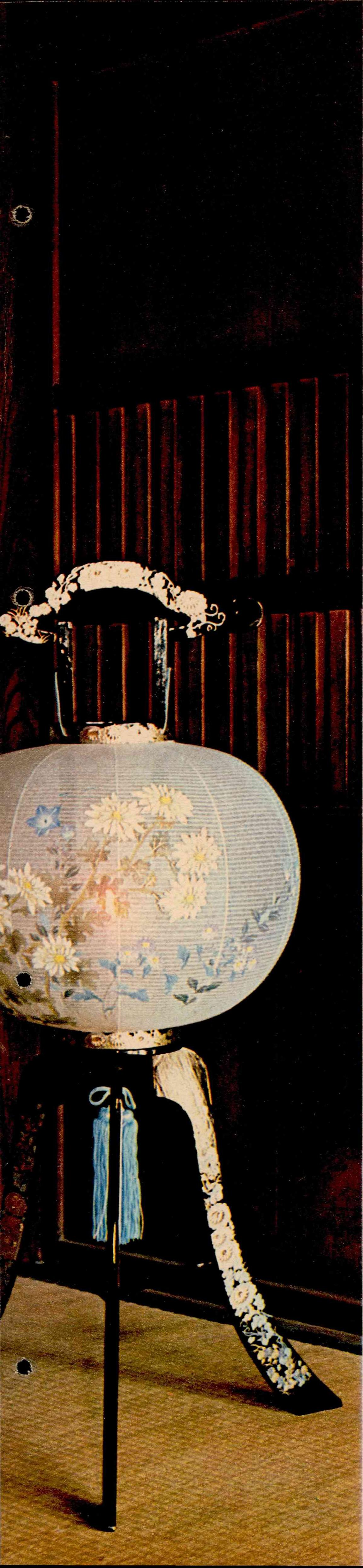
A few dabs of powdered glitter complete the decoration of the intricate lacquered rims.

must be done freehand. A plaster-like composition of ground oystershell, the paint is the same as the one applied to the faces of Japanese dolls. Each petal is drawn with a single stroke of a long haired brush, and as it dries, it naturally forms a slight indentation down the center that is just like the petal of that sacred flower.

So it is that a dozen pairs of hands impart their skill to create one of these gossamer spheres that will one summer evening transport an ordinary room to the timeless calm of a quiet meadow.

However, the future of Gifu *chochin* is as fragile as the lanterns themselves. Few young people have the dedication of the lacquerer who is content to do an anonymous job as well as if he were personally lauded and is pleased to have the meager rewards of a simple life. They would rather join an auto assembly line or be in the air-conditioned comfort of an office. Perhaps there are those who would say that such demanding handwork, even the *chochin* themselves, are out of place in the modern world. But as man surrounds himself with artificial products, he is losing a proper sense of the human being as an integral part of nature. *Chochin* are necessary to remind us of the time when man felt as one with the elements, and thus treasured and utilized to the fullest extent everything that nature provided. Without the precedent of *chochin*, who today would have the imagination to take paper for lamps? Opaque plastic would probably be the average choice. Yet no other material has this extraordinary quality of filtering light to a soft, warm moonglow. And then to have combined it with the suppleness of bamboo to produce a conveniently light, collapsible sphere — that was a genius of design.



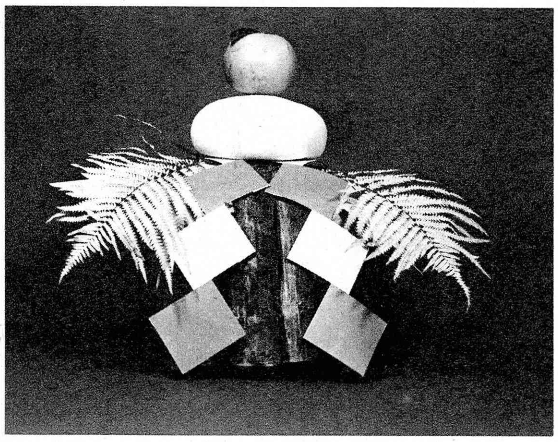


Far left: The diffused glow of light created by the hand-made paper, the strong lines of the bamboo ribs combine in a natural harmony that lends beauty to any room. Left: The dark woodwork of an old Gifu house provides a perfect background for the delicate hanging chochin and standing "ouchi andon" set here for the Bon festival. Above: Serene calm is radiated through the garden of Senryu Restaurant from the soft candlelight of a Gifu chochin as a guest awaits a cup of tea.

Mochi, a Food Steeped in Tradition

By Shinobu Sunaga

Photos by Japan Illustrated



Rice-cake offerings made to the ancestral altar on the New Year's Day comprise a pair of "kagami-mochi," a smaller one put on the larger, with a "daidai" orange on top, twin branches of "urajiro" fern, a pair of "gohei" (pendant paper strips of Shintoism) and a strip of kelp hang from the twin rice cakes. In some regions, a ring of straw works, a boiled lobster, dried sargassos or red-and-white paper strings are used instead or in addition.

Mochi or rice cake is a year-round favorite with the Japanese. But it reaches the peak of popularity during the New Year holidays. In fact, no Japanese can go without *mochi* in celebrating the advent of a New Year.

How Mochi Is Made

Left to right below: (1) A quantity of glutinous rice is first steeped in water for about six hours. Then the water is drained off. (2) The soaked rice is put in a steaming frame with a bamboo-strip bottom. (3) The frames filled with rice are stacked one upon another and put over a cauldron. The rice is steamed for half an hour. (4) Steamed rice is put into a wooden mortar. (5) The steaming rice is gently kneaded into a pasty condition. (6) Finally, a man with a big pestle pounds the half-done mochi while another man or woman keeps the lump in proper shape as the pounding goes on.

On New Year's Day, every Japanese family greets the advent of the year with a *mochi* breakfast. In this fare, the rice cake is served in *zoni* — a kind of stew containing *mochi* cooked with vegetables and such proteinous ingredients as fillet of fish, meat or chicken.

Zoni recipes differ from region to region and from one household to another. The custom of having *zoni* on New Year's Day is said to have originated in the 15th Century.

Rice cakes are made either as separate small, round pieces or as square cuts made from a larger, round or oblong lump of pounded rice after it has hardened.

The larger round rice cake is called *kagami-mochi* and is used as a New Year household decoration. When used for this purpose, two *kagami-mochi,* slightly differing in size, are stacked one on top of the other and offered to the ancestral altar of each family. The big rice cakes, usually about a foot in diameter, are later cut into smaller pieces and eaten by family members, who believe that the custom insures good health and good fortune for them.

Another *mochi*-made New Year decoration is *mayudama* (cocoon jewels) — tiny cocoon-like pieces of *mochi* attached to branches of willow tree. This decoration is used by silk-raising farmers as a charm for big cocoon crop.

Mochi for New Year celebration is made during the final week of December. In olden times, it used to be prepared at each household. In the countryside, the whole family join in the effort even today but in towns, professional rice pounders come around equipped with all necessary utensils such as rice-steaming frames, pestles and mortars.

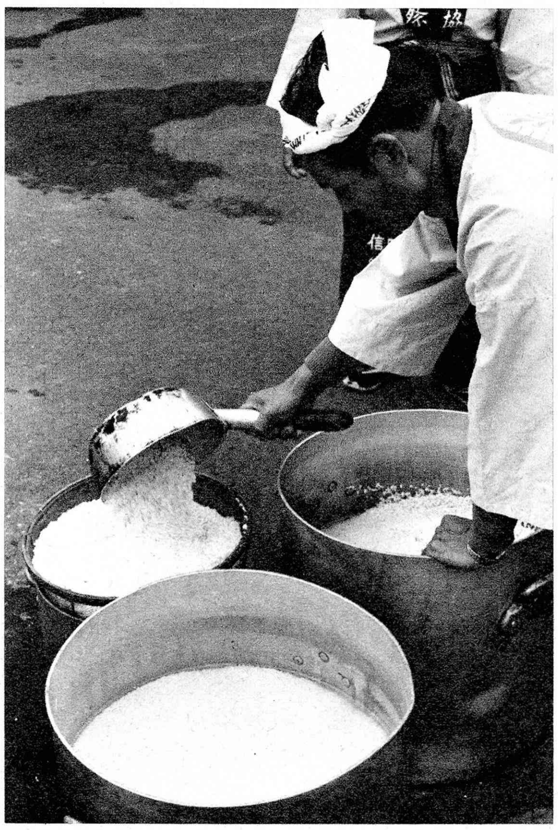
Today, many confectionery shops prepare *mochi* in a professional way and deliver the finished products to the customers. Children of urban families are thus denied the pleasure of watching the *mochi*-making ceremony — to say nothing of the thrill of plucking off lumps from the soft, warm mass of pounded rice and kneading them into proper shape.

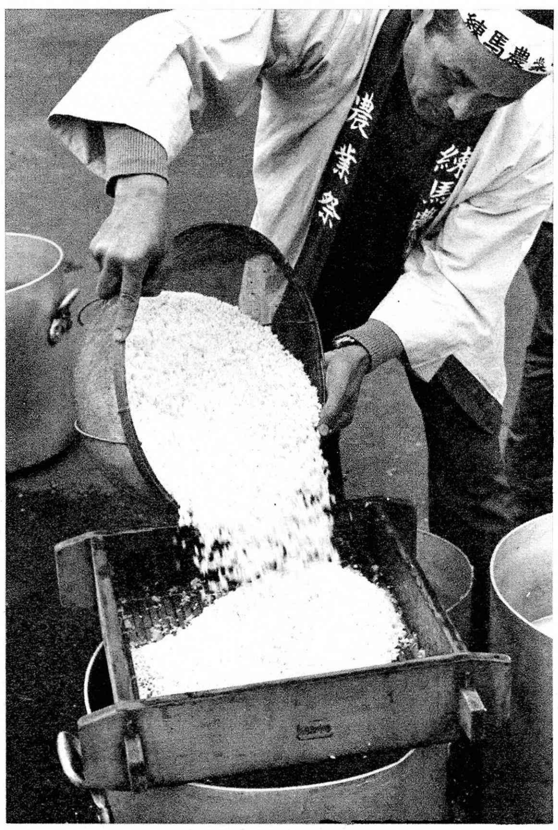
In a more recent development, gadget-crazy Japanese have developed compact electric *mochi*-making machines for home use. The contraption is fast becoming a kitchen fixture in many a home.

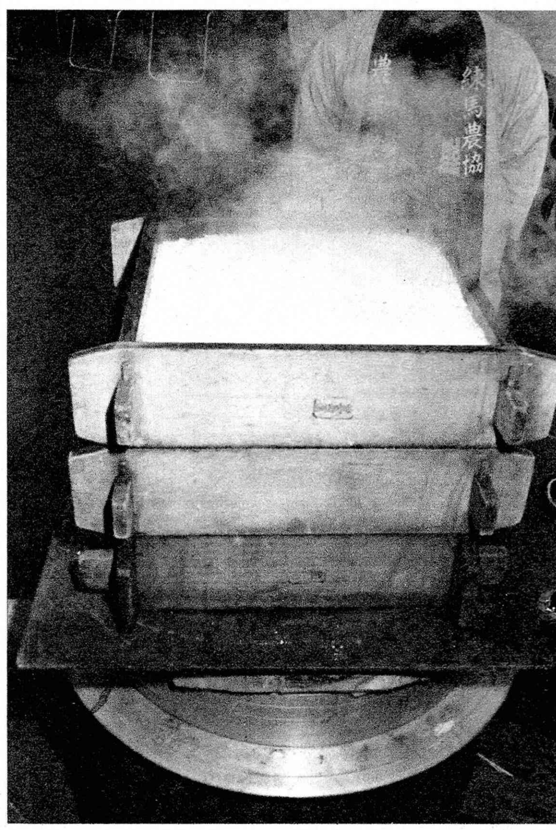
Contemporary children are also becoming ignorant of the romantic legend that they can see the image of a rabbit pounding *mochi* in a mortar on the face of a full moon. The September harvest moon used to be an occasion for indulging in this sort of poetic fantasy.

While the New Year holiday is a big time for *mochi* eating, there are many other occasions when the rice cake is prepared to celebrate happy events. These include Shinto festivals, completion of a new house, wedding receptions and the birth of a baby.

Farmers make *mochi* with their new crop of glutinous rice and dedicate the products to the neighborhood shrine as a token of gratitude for







bumper crops and good health. The photographs on these pages depicting the process of *mochi* making were taken at such a thanks-giving festival sponsored by the Nerima Agricultural Cooperative in Tokyo.

In days gone by when entertainment was scarce, the simple act of toasting rice cakes over a charcoal fire provided young Japanese girls with a good deal of homely merry-making. They would put two pieces of *mochi* side by side and name them for an imaginary girl and boy. When toasted on the grill, the *mochi* puff up and if the one named for a body produces a big bubble and sticks to the *mochi* named for a girl, it is taken as a sign that the boy will propose. The girls playing this game sometimes had some real persons in mind and enjoyed themselves watching the imaginary love affair develop.

HOW TO COOK *MOCHI* DISHES

Mochi is available around New Year holidays at food-stores, supermarkets or rice dealers. You can also make it at home by using the electric *mochi*-making pot. All you have to do is put the water-soaked glutinous rice grains in the pot and switch it on.

Why don't you try some of the typical *mochi* dishes given below?

Sumashi zoni in Tokyo style (Serves 4)

This is the simplest kind of *zoni.*

For the soup:

4 cups of water
10 cm. piece of *dashi konbu* (kelp)
1 cup of bonito shavings (*katsuobushi* or *kezuribushi*)
⅔ teaspoon of salt
2 tsp. *usukuchi shoyu* (thin soy sauce)
1 tablespoon of sake

Steep a piece of washed kelp for 3 hours in the water. Heat the water with the kelp in it until it starts boiling and remove the kelp. Pour half a cup of water and bonito shavings. Bring it to a boil and remove it from the fire. When the shavings have sunk to the bottom of the pot, strain it. This is the *dashi,* basic broth for Japanese soups and dishes. Put salt, thin *shoyu* and sake in the heated *dashi.*

Ingredients:

4 pieces of toasted *mochi* (usually cut square)
4 pieces of *naruto* (fish paste stick with a red spiral pattern)
100 gm. *komatsuna* (a kind of green vegetable), boiled and cut in 4 cm. pieces
4 thin slices of *yuzu* (citron) peel

In each bowl put one toasted *mochi, naruto* and *komatsuna* and fill up the bowl with the hot soup. Put the *yuzu* peel on top and serve.

Shiro-miso zoni in Kyoto style (Serves 4)

The round shape of *mochi* and sliced *daikon* symbolizes the September harvest moon.

For the *shiro-miso* soup:

4 cups water
10 cm. piece *dashi konbu*
½ cup bonito shavings
120 gm. Kyoto *shiro-miso* (white soy bean paste)

Prepare the *dashi* as explained above. Put *shiro-miso* into the heated *dashi,* bring it to a boil and switch off the gas.

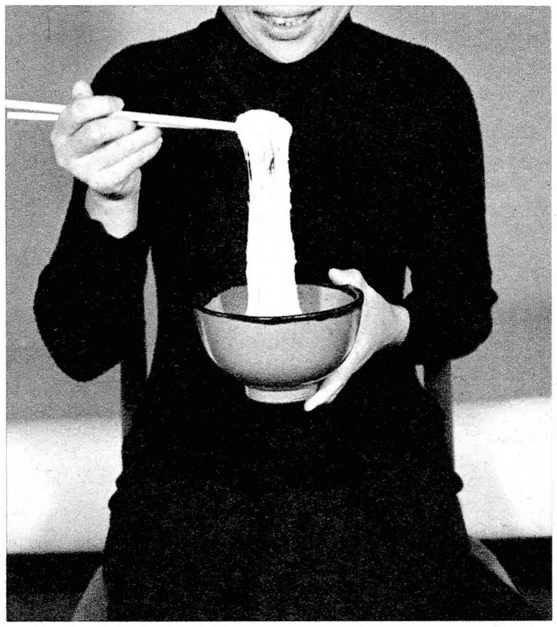
Ingredients:

4 round *mochi* cakes, boiled
4 two-cm. thick pieces of *daikon* (radish)
4 pieces of taro, peeled and boiled
10 gm. finely shaved *katsuobushi*

Put boiled *mochi,* radish and taro in each bowl and pour hot *shiro-miso* soup. Add fine bonito shavings on top before serving.

Chikuzen zoni in Fukuoka style (Serves 4)

Fukuoka, the trade center of Kyushu on the Sea of Japan, has developed rich *zoni* containing a lot of marine and farm products.



Cooked "mochi" is soft and smooth but very sticky as shown in the photo.

For the soup:

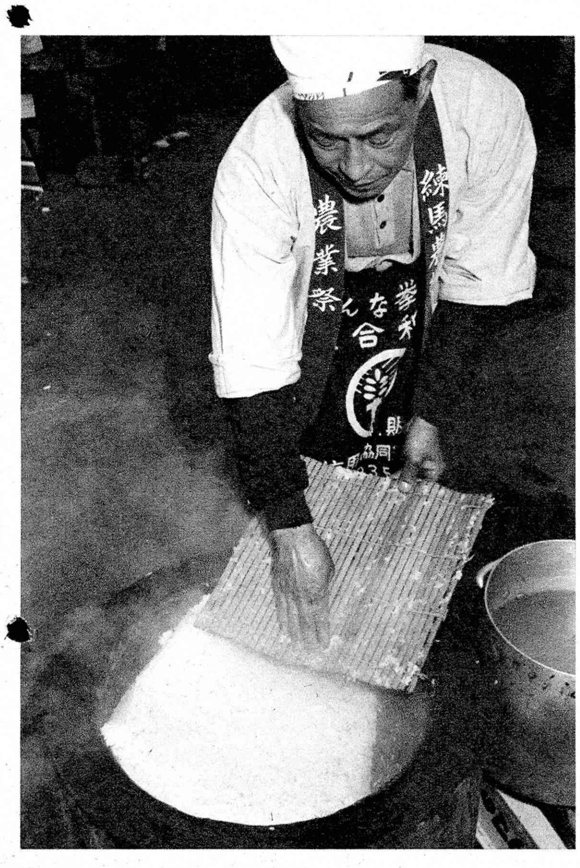
4 cups water
10 cm. piece kelp
½ cup *niboshi* (dried small sardines)
4 dried *shiitake* mushrooms
⅔ tsp. salt
1½ tbsp. *shoyu*

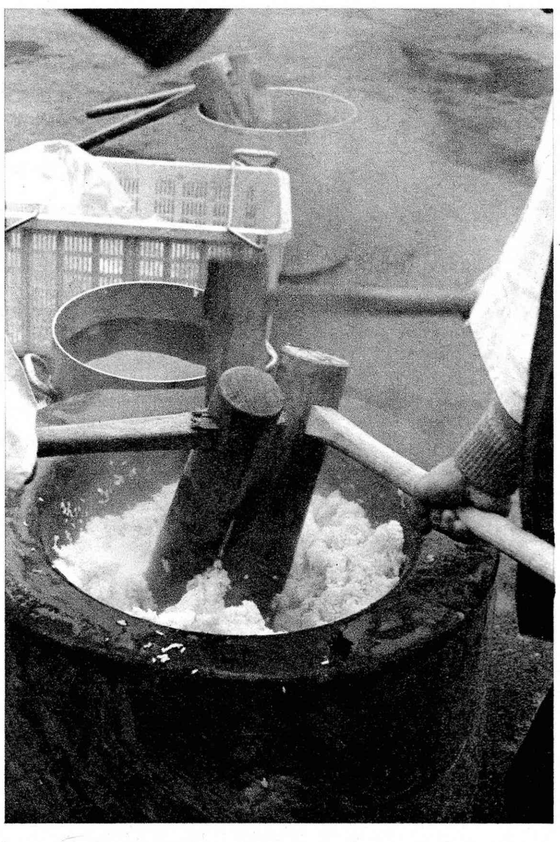
Soak kelp, dried sardines and *shiitake* in the given quantity of water for 3 hours. Let the pot heat until the water boils, turn off the gas and drain. Add salt and *shoyu* to taste.

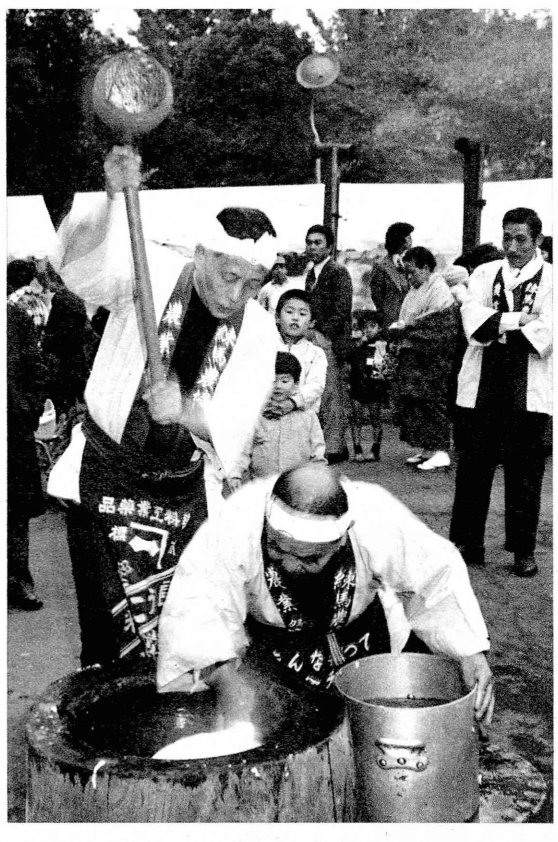
Ingredients:

4 boiled *mochi* cakes
4 pieces of dried *shiitake,* soaked in *dashi*
4 pieces of taro
4 slices of white *kamaboko* (fish paste)
4 slices of *kamaboko* with red brim
4 slices of *kamaboko* wrapped with kelp
4 slices of *naruto* (fish paste stick with red spiral pattern)

Continued on Page 37









Right: The three bowls in the central row contain ''zoni'' — the special dish served during the New Year holidays. Left to right: in styles of Tokyo, Fukuoka and Kyoto. Others are popular dishes served at home or Japanese-specialty tearooms. The ''mochi'' cakes on the twin plates, covered with yellow and green soy bean powder, are called ''kinako-mochi'' or ''abekawa-mochi.'' At bottom right is a bowl of ''shiruko'' — sweet adzuki bean paste with small pieces of the rice cake. The oblong plate contains pieces of ''isobe-maki'' — broiled and soy-seasoned ''mochi'' wrapped with fragrant pieces of dried seaweed ''nori,'' a popular Japanese delicacy. Above: A pot au feu called ''yose-nabe'' is a wintertime cuisine popular throughout Japan. A group of people sit around the table and enjoy cooking and serving themselves with the sliced fillet of fish and vegetables of the season in the style of sukiyaki dinner. The morsels are eaten after being dipped in the soy-vinegar sauce served in the bowl. Here again, ''mochi'' cakes stand out among the variety of ingredients, shown here beautifully arranged on the large plate at left. How to cook these ''mochi'' dishes is explained on the next page.



Continued from Page 35

4 fillets of salted yellowtail
4 fillets of chicken
4 one-cm. thick piece of boiled radish
1 bunch of boiled *komatsuna* or spinach

Put the radish at the bottom of the bowl and set the *mochi* on it. Arrange other ingredients over the *mochi*, fill up the bowl with the hot soup and serve.

Sweet *Shiruko* (Serves 4)

For *shiruko* bean paste:
150 gm. adzuki beans
4 cups of water
3 cups of sugar
a pinch of salt
1 tbsp. dogtooth starch dissolved in 1 tbsp. water

Soak the adzuki beans half a day. Drain and put fresh water just covering the surface of beans. Put the pot on the fire. When it has begun to boil, drain it, add enough fresh water to cover the beans and boil it again. Repeat the process of draining, adding fresh water, boiling and draining two more times. Then pour 4 cups of fresh water over the drained beans and simmer over the low fire for two hours until the beans become tender. Add sugar and salt to taste.

Heat the *shiruko* made one day before. Put dogtooth starch dissolved with water in it and stir a little.

Fill up each bowl with steaming hot *shiruko*, put a toasted rice cake in the bowl, and serve.

Kinako-mochi or ***abekawa-mochi*** (Serves 4)

When you use fresh soft *mochi* for this dish, you call it *abekawa-mochi*, and in case you take toasted *mochi*, you call it *kinako-mochi*.
8 round *mochi* cakes
1 cup yellow (or green) soy bean powder
1 cup sugar
a pinch of salt

Mix bean powder, sugar and salt in a bowl. Toast *mochi* cakes and soak them in very hot water for a while. Put the *mochi* into the prepared powder and turn them over a few times.

Fragrant *Isobe-maki* (Serves 4)

Japanese people toast *mochi* on the wire net over the slow fire. You may use the hot-plate cooker or oven-toaster.
8 pieces of square cut *mochi*
1 sheet of *nori* (dried seaweed), warmed and cut into 8 pieces
Shoyu enough to dip 8 pieces *mochi* in

Toast or broil the *mochi*. Dip them in *shoyu* and broil them over the fire or in the toaster again for a minute. Wrap a broiled cake with a piece of *nori*.

Yose-nabe (Serves 4)

Mochi cakes are cooked towards the end of the *Yose-nabe* course and served in place of rice, which is the staple food eaten with accompanying dishes at an ordinary meal.

For the soup:
10 cups (2 litres) of water
2 10-cm. pieces of kelp
½ cup *niboshi* or 1 cup *kezuribushi*
1 tbsp. salt
3 tbsp. *shoyu*
½ tbsp. *mirin* (sweeter sake)

Ingredients:
500 gm. chicken cut into bite-size pieces
8 prawn balls (boiled balls of chopped prawn with finely chopped onions and eggwhite, seasoned with salt and pepper)
1 squid, boiled and cut in bite-size
200 gm. fresh oysters
8 knots of *yuba* (dried thin layers of *tofu*), moistened
1 *akodai* (sea-bream), cut in bite-size
Several slices of *yaki-kamaboko* (roasted fish paste)
Several skewered gingko nuts
4 pieces of carrot, boiled and cut in 1cm. thick pieces
8 pieces of radish, roughly chopped and boiled
3 rolls of *hakusai* (Chinese cabbage) with spinach in the center, boiled and cut into 4 cm. pieces
4 fresh *shiitake* mushrooms
1 bunch of fresh *seri* (Japanese parsley), washed and cut into 5 cm. pieces
1 bunch of *shungiku* (a kind of chrysanthemum), washed and cut into 5 cm. pieces
4 one-cm. thick pieces of *fu* (wheat gluten cake)
4 quail eggs, boiled and peeled
4 round *mochi* cakes

Condiments of the indivisual dipping sauce:
Shoyu
Vinegar
Juice of ¼ lemon
Finely chopped leeks
Grated radish mixed with red hot pepper

Prepare the soup as explained above for *Chikuzen zoni*. Fill the earthenware cooking pot with the soup about half full. Cover and let it heat until the soup boils. Add chicken, fish, *hakusai* and let cook awhile. Next add other ingredients as you like. Green vegetables and oysters should be cooked for a minute or so before you pick them up. Dip the cooked items in a sauce of *shoyu* and vinegar flavored with lemon juice and other condiments. Add to the sauce a desired amount of the soup in the cooking pot. Put rice cakes into the rich soup in the pot and let them cook awhile until they turn soft.

Mrs. Sachiko Murakami prepared the recipes given here and cooked all the *mochi* dishes shown on the opposite page.

Current Topics

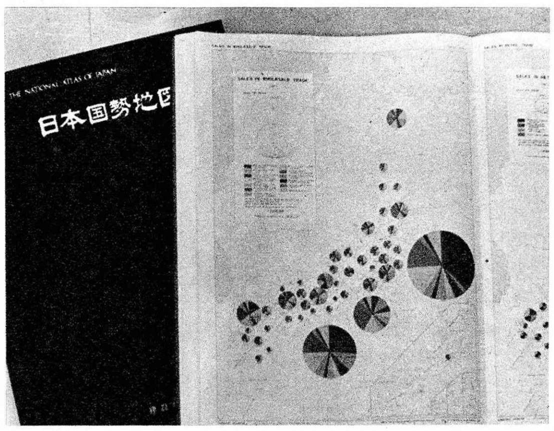
Japan to Publish First National Atlas

The Japanese Government will publish the first national atlas of Japan in early 1977, thus joining the 70 other foreign countries that have already produced their respective national atlases as of 1976.

At the Geographical Survey Institute of the Ministry of Construction in Meguro Ward, Tokyo, a project team of about 20 compilers are adding the finishing touches to the National Atlas of Japan, which is due to be published on April 1.

Hachishiro Omori, the head of the project team, told The Japan Times that the 380-page "map encyclopedia" was the culmination of a five-year joint effort by all the government agencies, except the Ministry of Justice, under the general supervision of the institute.

The work to compile the gigantic atlas, weighing about seven kilograms, got under way finally in 1971 despite the fact that since 1958 international geographical organizations had persistently urged Japan to produce its national atlas.



One of the 180 maps included in the National Atlas of Japan, this one showing the distribution of wholesale volume.

Compilation work could not get off the ground until five years ago for a variety of reasons — red tape, financial and technical difficulties and others.

It was not easy for the more than 10 ministries and agencies represented on the Committee for the National Atlas of Japan to "fall into step" in the process of compiling the atlas, Omori, said.

The committee, consisting of 90 officials and scholars, acts as a filter for massive data and information fed by each ministry and agency.

The main task for the committee was to pare down the size of the atlas because each agency and every scholar had different priorities as to what should be included in the atlas.

Omori also pointed out that a budget for the atlas was not appropriated in the Diet before 1971. (The atlas will be priced at ¥80,000, but it would have cost ¥300,000 if it had been a commercial undertaking.)

Radical changes that have occurred in Japan's economy during the past several years made it extremely difficult for the institute to keep abreast of accurate facts and figures, thus delaying the start of the compilation, he said.

Technically speaking, the Japanese archipelago which is shaped somewhat like a long boot did not lend itself well to the 59-centimeter-high and 42-centimeter-wide map, he added.

The first national atlas of Japan could be highly valued as: (1) basic data for drawing up development plans, national or local, (2) a source of vital information for people engaged in research and development and the education industry, (3) data for market research and business planning for private enterprises, (4) a model for private atlas makers in compiling their own atlases and (5) an aid for foreign countries to understand Japan and Japanese.

The atlas consists of (1) general reference maps on Japan and its regions showing its physical features, and (2) thematic maps showing national development and conservation, population, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, mining, manufacturing and construction, transport and communications, foreign trade, politics, social conditions, education, culture and public welfare.

The total number of maps is 180 and 85 additional pages of supplemental charts and comments are included.

The section on social conditions, for example, concerns the distribution of special welfare institutions, public sewage systems and hospitals, as well as the number of physicians per 10,000 inhabitants.

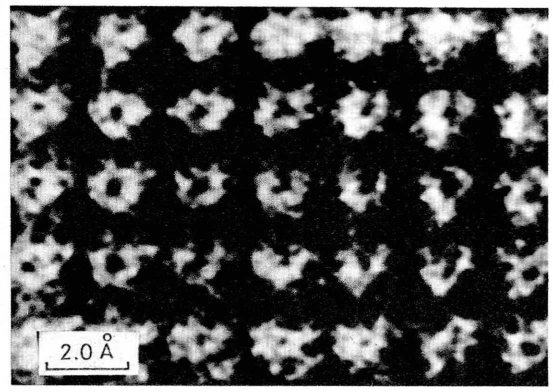
Maps showing the ratio of import dependency for principal raw materials and the distribution of department stores and supermarkets are also found in the atlas.

The Japan Map Center of the institute (Kudan Ponpian Building, 8-8 Kudanminami 4-chome, Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo, phone: 03-230-2289) will take orders from Nov. 1, last year through Feb. 28, this year.

The Geographical Survey Institute plans to print 4,000 copies of the Japanese language edition and 500 copies of the English language edition, and to up-date the work every five years on the basis of the latest national census.

Professor Takes Photos of Atom's Inner Structure

A professor at Osaka University's Engineering Department has succeeded in photographing the inner structure of an atom, showing the distinction between the nucleus and electron cloud clearly.



Prof. Hatsujiro Hashimoto, using a penetrating electron microscope with a resolving power of 2.4 angstrom (one angstrom is 1-100 millionth centimeter), took about 2,000 pictures of a single crystal of a gold leaf with a thickness of 160 angstrom magnified 750,000 times, in June 1976. Picking out relatively sharp photos, the professor magnified the distinct portions of the pictures by 100 million to 200 million times.

The result was pictures with images of 40 atoms of gold lined up checkerwise. Each image of the atom had a black spot in the center surrounded by white cloud-like spots.

According to the professor, an atom is made up of a nucleus surrounded by electrons and the blackish spot in the center is where the nucleus is situated. The whitish parts surrounding it are where electrons exist, he explained.

The nucleus is about 3 angstrom in diameter and since the part that appears to be the nucleus was clearly shown, the resolution was raised to 0.5 angstrom, he explained.

The professor claimed this was the first time ever that the inner structure of an atom has been photographed.

The epochal photographing was reported to the Japan Physical Science Society meeting held at Yamagata University in October, 1976.

New Artificial Hand Uses Computer and Oil Device

An artificial hand that works nearly like the real thing has been developed by the Medical Technology Research and Development Foundation.

Compared with other artificial hands presently available, the movements of the newly-developed "limb" have been improved with the use of a computer and an oil pressure device. It can be easily used by a person who has lost a hand and most of the forearm.

The foundation hopes the artificial hand will be available in two or three years' time with the development of a miniature computer.

The newly-developed hand consists of fingers

and a wrist made of a light metal. It has a power source, an oil pressure device and a computer.

The oil pressure device makes its operation quite unlike that of a conventional power-driven artificial hand using pinions.

The hand is linked to the muscles of the forearm through electrodes.

The electrodes, catching the movements of the arm's muscles, relay signals to the computer which then issues instructions to the hand for the required movements.

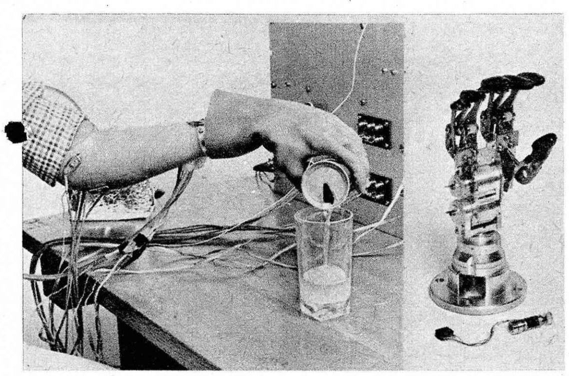
The foundation claims that the artificial hand enables its user to carry out normal daily chores like eating, brushing and shaving.

The device, however, is not suitable for hard labor. It takes 1.2 seconds to move a finger or the hand as a whole by 90 degrees. Its maximum grasping power is 1.6 kilograms and the maximum pressure which can be exerted by the hand is only 0.8 kilogram.

The foundation says the device may sell for about ¥1 million when its commercial production becomes feasible.

It has been developed by a research team headed by Prof. Ichiro Kato at the School of Science and Engineering of Waseda University.

The artificial hand will be exhibited at Robot 77 international exhibition to be held in late February in Moscow.



A man wearing a new computerized artificial hand (left, gloved) demonstrates the use of the hand by pouring beer into a glass. At right is an ungloved version of the device.

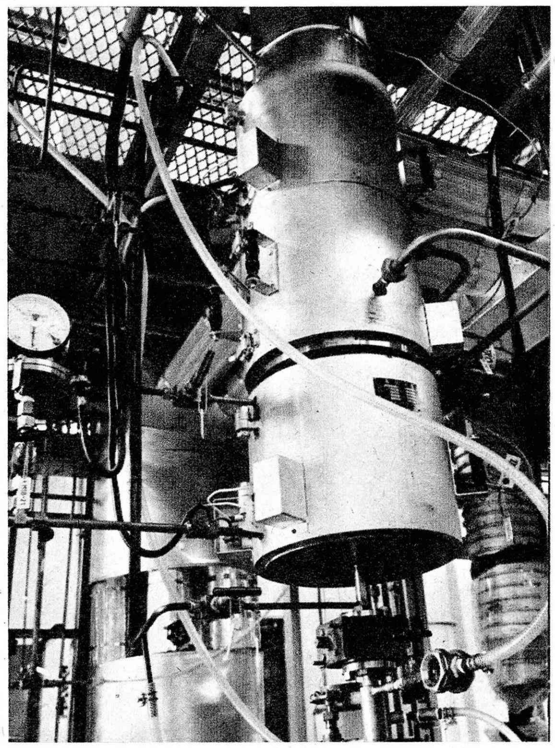
New Uranium Refining Method Demonstrated

A Japanese-developed method of extracting uranium hexafluoride directly from the natural ore for the production of Uranium 235-enriched fuel for nuclear power reactors was demonstrated recently at a test plant set up near Okayama.

The plant has been built at the Ningyo Toge uranium mine, Okayama Prefecture. The mine is owned by the governmental Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation.

Scientists at the plant said the wet, integrated uranium refining process represents an innovational departure from conventional method of baking uranium ore into the so-called "yellow cakes" (triuranium octoxide or U_3U_8), and then obtaining uranium hexafluoride from the cakes.

The new process skips the yellow-cake-making and accompanying troubles to save time, labor and money.



A new uranium refining system completed at a test plant in Okayama Prefecture is said to save time, labor and money. The newly developed method extracts uranium hexafluoride directly from the natural ore for the production of Uranium 235.

The corporation had earlier developed the forerunner of the new method to extract uranium tetrafluoride directly from natural uranium ore.

It followed this up with the development of the main body of the new method to turn that uranium tetrafluoride into uranium hexafluoride through gasification. The hardware system built at the mine embodies both the forerunner and main body of the method.

The corporation has named the complete method, the result of 17 years of research, the "PNC Process" after the acronym of its own name.

The test plant, completed at a cost of ¥165 million in one year's time, has gone into regular operation.

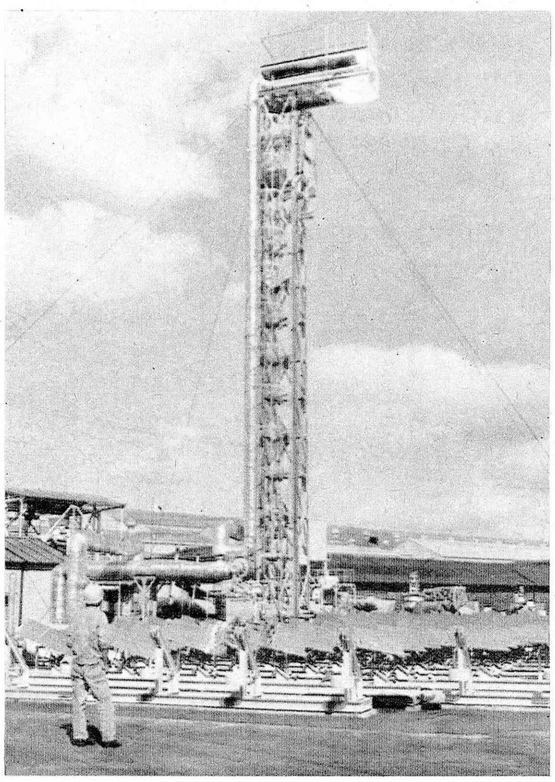
A new uranium tetra-to-hexafluoride conversion device with an annual capacity for processing 200 tons of uranium tetrafluoride is to be built by 1979.

The just-completed conversion device consists of

a 32-centimeter-across and 1.5-meter-high nickel alloy reaction tower, a refrigeration reclaimer and an emission gas treater. It can process 3 kilograms of uranium tetrafluoride per hour.

Uranium hexafluoride obtained as a cold solid is heated into a fluid and then pressure-packed into cylinders.

Tests to Generate Power With Solar Energy Start



An experimental solar energy collecting device developed by a private research institute is in operation in Hiroshima. Sunshine is reflected by heliostats on the ground and solar energy thus obtained is absorbed by pads at the top of the tower.

Full-scale experiments to generate power with solar energy have been started by the Hiroshima Research Institute of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' technological headquarters.

The experiments center on the development of a solar heat collecting device, the core of the solar energy power generation system.

According to officials at the institute, the test device is small, having an output capacity of only 10 kilowatts.

But it is designed to obtain enough data through tests for practical use of solar energy for power generation.

The institute has been commissioned by the Government's Industrial Science and Technology Agency to develop solar energy collective device as part of the "sunshine program" aimed at developing new sources of energy.

It aims at completing a pilot plant capable of producing 1,000 kilowatts of power by 1980.

The institute has adopted the tower formula as the solar heat collecting method.

Under the formula, sunshine is reflected by 88 heliostats, each made up of nine reflectors measuring 35 square centimeters.

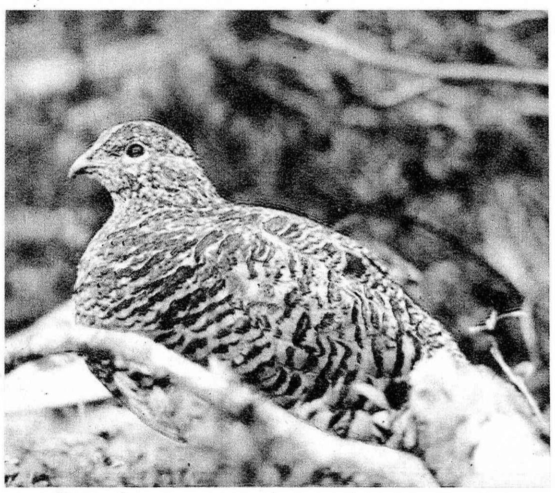
The solar energy is then concentrated on absorption pads measuring 50 square centimeters located at the top of a 15-meter tower.

The heat assembled in the absorption pads is used to raise the temperature to between 400 and 800 C.

Because the test device has no turbine, the heat is discharged.

Institute officials said that the device is able to utilize 80 per cent of the solar energy collected. The pilot plant to be completed in fiscal 1980 will have reflectors measuring four meters and a 68-meter heat collecting tower, they said.

Near-Extinct Birds Sighted in the Japan Alps



One of the ptarmigans found on Mt. Tsurugi.

Nature conservation officials of the Toyama Prefectural Government recently reported sighting 80 ptarmigans, now on the verge of extinction, on and around Mt. Tsurugi of the Northern Japan Alps.

This has raised to 524 the number of grouse confirmed nesting in the alpine peaks.

The 80 ptarmigans included 51 male and 29 female birds.

As many as 26 female birds were without chicks, probably due to the torrential rains during the period of hatching and slaughtering by animals and predatory birds, according to the officials.

They said these animals and predatory birds have been attracted to the mountain by food and refuse left by hikers.

Accordingly, the prefectural government plans to launch a campaign to keep the mountainsides clear of litter.

New Anticancer Drug Developed

A new anticarcinogenic antibiotic with less side effects than other similar drugs is claimed to have been developed by researchers at the Microbial Chemistry Research Institute.

The new drug, aclacinomycin A, was isolated and refined in 1974 by a team headed by Dr. Hamao Umezawa from a cultured solution of actinomyces found in the soil at Osaki, Shinagawa Ward, Tokyo.

Dr. Umezawa is noted for his discovery of kanamycin, a drug for tuberculosis, and pleomycin, an anticancer agent.

Structurally, the new anticancer agent belongs to the same category as adriamycin and daunomycin, anticancer agents developed in Italy.

In animal tests conducted over two years at the Microbial Chemistry Research Institute, the Cancer Institute and the U.S. National Cancer Institute, it was found that aclacinomycin A was as effective as adriamycin in the treatment of leukemia L1210 and sarcoma 180 in mice.

It proved to be less effective than adriamycin but as effective as daunomycin on other types of leukemia and hard cancers in animals.

What distinguishes aclacinomycin A from other biotics is its negligible side effects compared with adriamycin, which causes loss of hair and weakening of the heart muscles.

In mice and rats the acute toxicity of aclacinomycin was about half that of adriamycin, and in hamsters the heart toxicity was only about one-fifteenth, indicating its very low subacute and chronic toxicity.

After the basic experiments were completed, Dr. Hisashi Furue of the Cancer Institute Hospital started clinical observation of the effects of the anticancer agent at his hospital in June, last year. So far more than 20 terminal patients suffering from stomach cancer, lung cancer and metastasis of breast cancer have been administered the drug.

None of the patients has suffered any serious side effects. Almost no cardial abnormalities, loss of hair or reduction of white corpuscles were observed. The patients complained only of nausea.

When aclacinomycin A was administered to patients for whom all other anticancer agents had proved ineffective, the cancer subsided.

Encouraged with the result, Dr. Furue plans to test the drug on more patients and initiate joint studies of the drug with a number of medical research bodies to determine against what type of cancer the agent would prove most effective and how it should best be used.

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CONTENTS



Cover photo: The patterned paper of old Edo—chiyogami—still brightens the life of Japanese girls who never tire of inventing new ways to use it. Motifs are those dear to the inhabitants of downtown Edo: Kabuki scenes, Noh masks, toys, and kimono designs. *(See pp. 28-33)*

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How Traditional is the Avant-Garde!

Story & photos by
Ian Buruma PHOTOJOURNALIST

MOST people who have paid a visit to Japan have had at least a casual glance at its theatre. In most cases, however, people don't get much further than the Kabuki-za or the Nichigeki Music Hall, which is a pity, as there exists a wide range of modern Japanese theatre in Tokyo which is largely unknown to foreigners (and to many Japanese as well). In any case even a glimpse of Kabuki is enough to give an impression of the main differences between Japanese and Western theatre.

It is obvious for instance that instead of trying to imitate reality, Japanese actors and playwrights always attempted to create a deliberately stylized theatrical world. Masks, exaggerated make-up, puppets and music have always been vital to the Japanese theatrical style. In the case of puppet-plays, the puppet-players never attempted to hide themselves from the audience in order to highten the illusion of reality as is customary in the West. Similarly in Kabuki a beautiful phrase or pose is stylized in such a way that it gets the maximum theatrical effect. One of the reasons for this deliberately theatrical style can be seen in the way Japanese theatre evolved.

As in other cultures, theatre started as religious ritual. Dances for the rice-gods, fertility rites and other religious practices formed the beginning of Japanese theatre as it did everywhere else, but Western theatre became severed of its religious origins quite early on and in fact became more and more intellectual. This never really happened in Japan up until the Meiji Restoration. Of course Bunraku and Kabuki can hardly be called religious rites, but the essence is still to reach out to somewhere beyond daily existence. The way Kabuki actors move is in many ways very similar to ancient dancing.

In fact, every Kabuki performance still has dance interludes, which are largely derived from Noh drama. These dances are still very close in spirit to the earliest forms of Japanese dance/theatre. There is a famous legend of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, who hid away in her cave until she was enticed to come out of her hiding place by Ame no Uzume no Mikoto, who performed a very sexy dance in front of the cave. This shows how closely dance and religion have been linked to eroticism in Japanese culture. Up until this day the very same elements form the backbone of Japanese theatre. In fact avant-garde dancing in Japan is extremely close in spirit to these oldest forms of Japanese theatre. I will deal with this kind of dancing, called *Ankoku Buto,* separately.

There is another reason why Japanese theatre never tried to disguise its theatricality. Japanese audiences have always been fascinated by how something is done. They want to see the actual tricks so that they can admire the skill with which they are done. When film was first introduced, the audience would spend half its time staring at the projector which held just as much interest as the actual movie. It goes without saying that when one tries to create another world instead of imitating reality one needs a lot of time, which is why many Japanese films and plays tend to be slow in the eyes of many foreigners, who are used to fast action. However, in order to really understand the beauty of Japanese theatre and films one must get used to this. Just seeing one act of Kabuki (usually a dance number) or a heavily edited film (in order to speed up the action) completely ruins the intended effect.

Since the Meiji Restoration Japan has been doing its utmost to become a Western nation in many ways, and this experiment has obviously had some disastrous results. One of the fields in which Japan has been trying to modernize (meaning Westernize) is the theatre.

Continued on Page 4

Opposite page: A favorite Terayama image from "Ekibyo Ryukoki" (the Chronicle of an Epidemic)



Continued from Page 2

New dramatic movement brings back original spirit of Japanese theatre

A NEW theatre movement was created with very important consequences. One was that the tendency to intellectualize Kabuki took much of its sensuality and often even salaciousness away, while at the same time alienating much of its audience. The new wave of Japanese theatre in the beginning of this century, called *Shingeki* (literally "new theatre"), tried to create realistic theatre along Western lines. Away went the puppets, the masks and the music, often with very mixed results. It presented formidable problems to actors who were trained to play in deliberately theatrical style, using established techniques. Actors were not trained to express the individual psychology of a part by identifying themselves with the part as Western actors strive to do.

In Japan an actor was always an actor and not a fake individual. Japanese actors have to hide themselves behind their "masks" or else they feel lost. Therefore, plays by Ibsen or Chekhov are very difficult for Japanese to do successfully, while Brecht with his alienation theatre can work beautifully here. The "New Theatre" even led to such absurdities as playing with blond wigs on and wearing fake high-bridged noses.

Fortunately in the sixties there was a huge reaction against this type of theatre. Along with the political demonstrations against the U.S. defense pact and wide-spread student revolt, Japanese theatre finally shed its fake Westernization and started to experiment by bringing back Japanese techniques, usually based on popular theatre. Various important groups emerged in the mid-sixties, many of which are still playing now. Along with the revival of a very Japanese theatrical style, they also brought back the spirit which created Japanese theatre.

The often dark eroticism which has always been an important part of Japanese culture was freely expressed again. Although the traditional dramatic arts have lost much of their pre-Meiji flamboyance, the theatre of the lower classes had retained it to a large extent. The vaudeville shows, roving street-entertainers and popular theatres although largely a thing of the past now, had never lost their original spark completely, and it is to these kinds of entertainment that many of the young theatre-producers in the sixties turned for much of their inspiration. Not only are the techniques they use often very similar to the popular theatre-troupes, but also their life style. Various modern groups go around the country performing in tents, which they carry with them, just as the old-style entertainers used to do and most groups live the same sort of communal life that used to be the standard theatrical life style.

The most important theatre-groups to have emerged in the sixties are the "Jokyo Gekijo," led by Juro Kara, who writes and directs all their plays, and the "Tenjo Sajiki," which was started by Shuji Terayama, a famous poet who blossomed into a filmmaker, novelist, photographer, horse-racing commentator and of course theatre-director and playwright. The other two best-known groups are the "Waseda Shogekijo," directed by Tadashi Suzuki and the "Black Tent," directed by Makoto Sato.

TERAYAMA has experimented with many different theatrical forms, ranging from the old-fashioned freak-shows that roam the countryside to the using of *kurogo* (the Kabuki stage-hands) in a totally original way. Terayama creates a theatrical world which he means to be a separate reality. Terayama himself wants theatre to be a merging of the spectators and the actors in a world of the imagination. For his plays he uses any kind of space, from the streets of Shinjuku, to the old opera-houses of East Europe. He will employ anything to create the desired festival-like atmosphere, including violence, sex, smells, loud, incessant music and drugs. At an international theatre-festival he even set an important drama-critic on fire, while in another of his plays live chickens were slaughtered, an act which has been popular in festival side-shows for centuries. Most of the members of the "Tenjo Sajiki" live together like a close-knit family. This started when Terayama began to gather runaway kids around him about ten years ago. It is these kids who formed the original nucleus of his group. Although Terayama's personal philosophy is very much against the traditional Japanese family, this has not prevented him from starting a new one.

Juro Kara of the "Jokyo Gekijo," stages his plays in a huge red tent, which the group carries around from place to place in order to break down the suffocating walls of old-fashioned theatre-houses. Kara's theatre is quite similar in style to the popular theatre groups that used to put up their tents in front of country shrines, where they performed vulgarized versions of Kabuki and samurai dramas for the masses. The verbal sophistication of Kara's plays is often disguised by a barrage of visual vulgarity, which is often very exciting and cleverly done. His actors usually end up covered up in filth, while the scenery is in tatters after an evening of Kara's rough-housing. His theatrical philosophy is nicely summed up in Nagisa Oshima's movie "Diary of a Shinjuku Thief." Kara appears as himself in this archetypal sixties movie. The male protagonist (played by the designer Tadanori Yokoo) conquers his mental confusion and his sexual impotency by acting out his fantasies in one of Kara's plays. The moral of the story is that one can only find one's true identity through theatrical alienation.

Like Terayama, Kara builds up a theatrical world of his imagination. There is a big difference between the two, though, in that Kara's theatrical world exists within the confines of his tent. Kara likes to express himself entirely in the theatre, separately from reality. Terayama on the other hand sees the whole world as theatre. He doesn't believe in the theatre as a separate entity. Another main difference between the two is that Kara's plays are much more tightly structured than Terayama's. His plays are more literate and more finished than Terayama's plays which are looser, less verbal and leave more to the imagination of the spectator.

Tadashi Suzuki's "Waseda Shogekijo" is perhaps the most classical of the afore-mentioned groups. His theatre has been influenced a lot by Kabuki and Kyogen (the comic interludes in Noh plays). He has adapted Western plays brilliantly to the Japanese stage. For example, he put on a Kabuki version of "Trojan Women," which was a huge success. His last production in Tokyo was a view of modern Japan, based loosely on Macbeth. One of the characteristics of his theatre is the emphasis on the body as a means of expression. His leading actress, Kayoko Shiraishi, has become legendary for her extraordinary feats. His actors contort their bodies, faces and voices in order to transform themselves in their roles.

The most political group is surely the "Black Tent" theatre, directed by Makoto Sato. The group was started in 1968 by ex-members of another group, called the "Jiyu Gekijo." They carried their black tent with them from place to place, living a hand-to-mouth existence. More than any other group they tried to create a political movement in modern theatre, unlike Suzuki, Terayama or Kara, who are all far more individualistic in their approach. Sato's plays are always directed against what he considers fascism in Japanese society. The setting is often before or during the last war and the emperor is a constant, although somewhat easy, target for ridicule. Sato hates militarism with a passion and considers the reverence of the Japanese for authority highly dangerous.

BESIDES a renewal of the theatre in Japan there has also been a very interesting revolution in dance, which as I have mentioned before, has close links with the theatre. For years Japan had been trying to incorporate modern ballet, rather unsuccessfully. The man who changed all this was Tatsumi Hijikata. He destroyed all the half-hearted attempts at Western dancing and instead created a completely different form of dance much more suited to Japanese physique and culture. This new style of dancing is called *Ankoku Buto* or literally "Dance of Darkness," a style of dancing which is a bit like the religious fervor of shamans going into trance. The dancers express death, darkness and the unknown in order to get to the roots of human life. Death and eroticism have always been closely linked in Japanese culture and in the *Ankoku Buto,* it finds its perfect expression. The dancers are always made-up like death masks and their movements are painfully slow. The ultimate aim of this kind of dancing is similar to Noh and earlier



The leader of the "Dairakudakan," Akaji Maro in "Arashi" (Storm)

forms of Japanese religious dance; namely, the transformation of the human soul.

Yoko Ashikawa, the star dancer of Hijikata's group, the "Asubesutokan," is certainly one of the most fascinating dancers in the world at the moment. The intensity of her performances always leaves the audience in a sort of daze. Japan was originally, and still is in many ways, a matriarchal society. The very first religious dancers were probably women and it is a known fact that the founder of Kabuki was a woman, named Okuni. It is interesting, therefore, that after so many years of male domination over Japanese theatre, women are finally picking up again where Okuni left off.

At the end of the sixties and in the beginning of the seventies, many original members of the famous groups like the "Jokyo Gekijo" and the "Tenjo Sajiki" started their own groups. In fact like everywhere else, the end of the sixties was very much a time of internal bickering and gradual establishment of former rebels. One interesting group, started by an ex-member of the "Jokyo Gekijo," is the "Tsumbo Sajiki," a small group that produces new plays about every month. Like Kara's, their theatre is close to the popular, swashbuckling brand of theatre called *taishu engeki* or "theatre for the masses." This means a lot of sword-fights, Japanese Grand Guignol, popular songs, and bawdy jokes. Another ex-Jokyo member who started on his own is Akaji Maro, who leads a group called the "Dairakudakan," an *Ankoku Buto* group in the Hijikata tradition.

Maro has done very interesting experiments

combining dance-theatre with live jazz. His most recent performance was together with the Yosuke Yamashita jazz-trio. The merging of frightening, death-like images with the manic sounds of free-jazz worked extremely effectively.

The performances of the "Dairakudakan" are non-verbal and therefore there is no language barrier to worry about.

LIKE everywhere else the generation of the seventies in Japan are a completely different kettle of fish from the sixties generation. Theatre audiences have changed and so has the theatre itself. The seventies generation is called the *shirake sedai,* which roughly means the blank, passive generation. Nobody can be bothered any longer with political problems or anything else particularly serious for that matter. The present generation has no memories of the war, or of the poverty-stricken years thereafter. Maybe the passive, I-couldn't-care-less attitude can be seen as a reaction against the feverish activity of their elders.

In any case, if there is a trend to be seen at the moment, it is certainly a reflection of the attitude of the younger audience. The present audience doesn't want to get agitated politically any more. All they ask for is to be entertained.

The big star at the moment is an incredibly prolific playwright called Kohei Tsuka. His plays are fast, rather shallow and full of laughs. Even Kara seems to have gone into this direction. He doesn't have the same audience he had ten years ago, and his new plays reflect this. He has lost a lot of his bite, but his capacity to entertain and be witty has made him tremendously popular with the youngest audiences.

Where all this will lead nobody knows, but it is my feeling that the trend, started in the sixties towards a new type of Japanese theatre, will continue and there is still an awful lot of room for experiment.

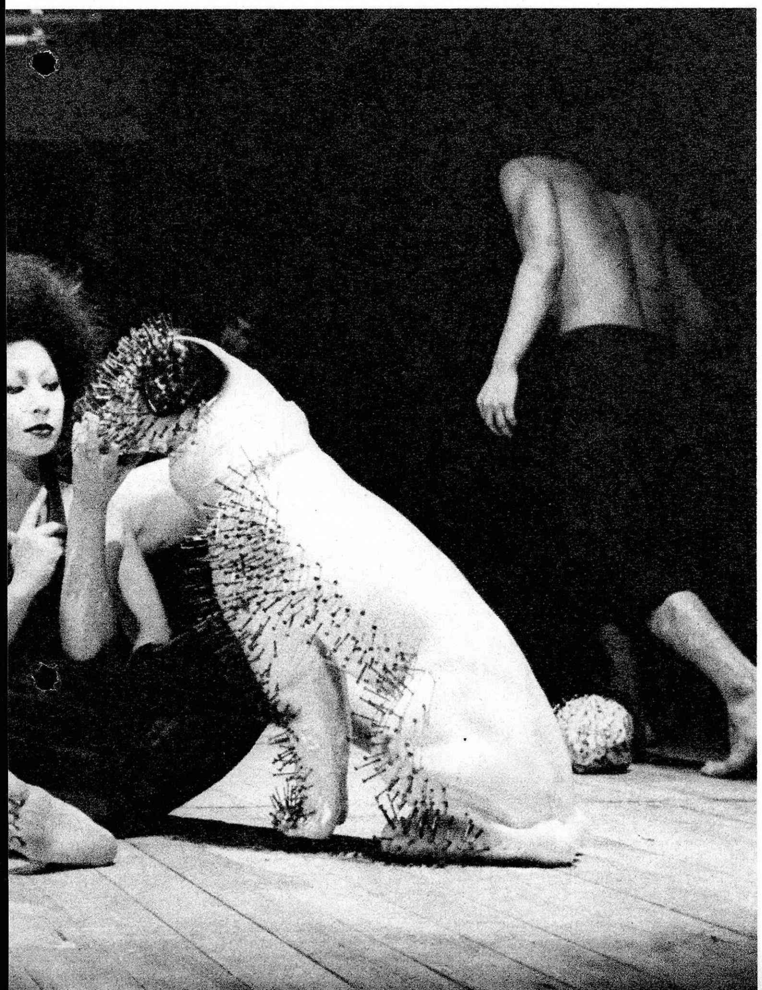






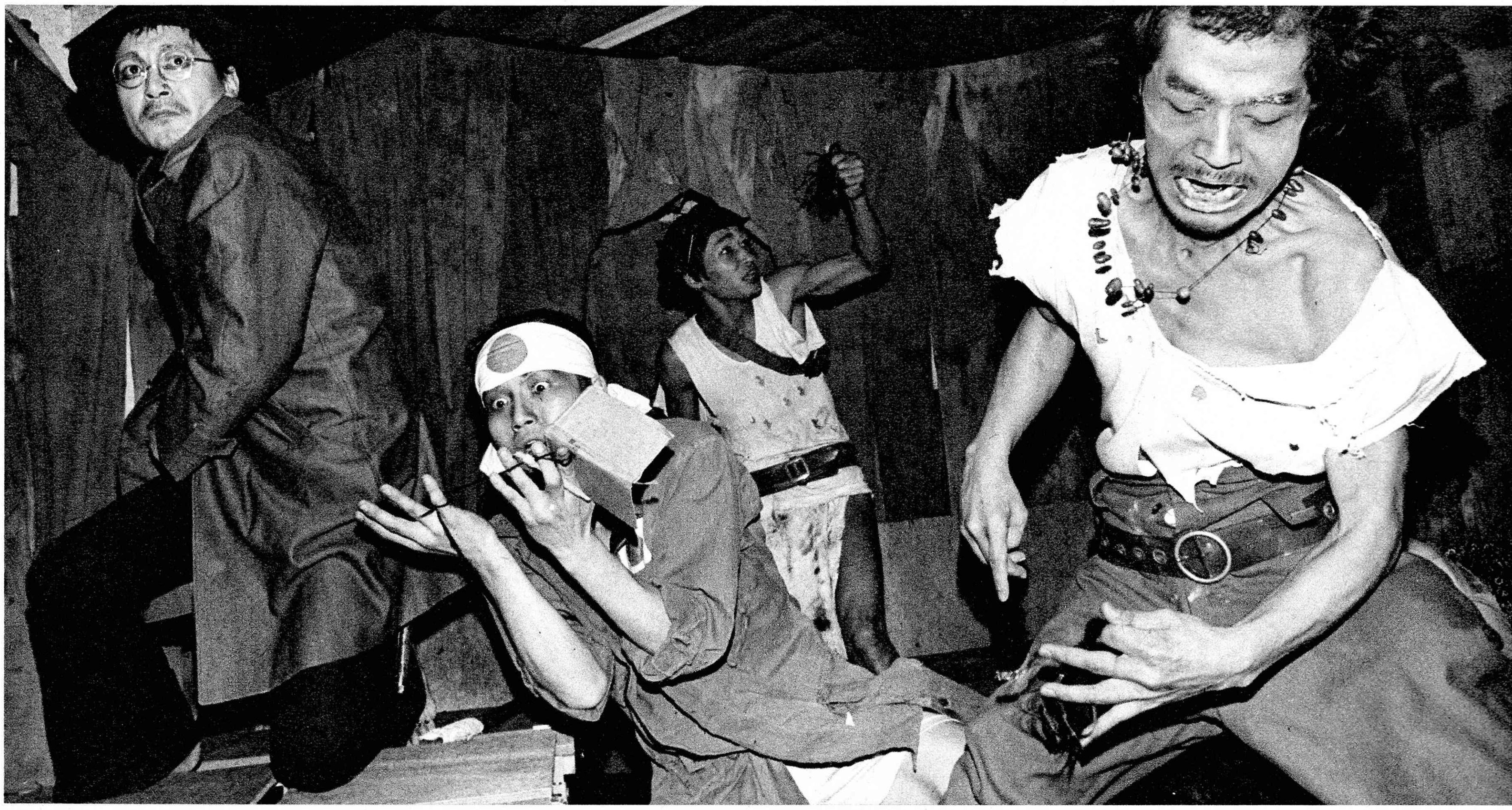
Upper right: Female sadism as seen by Terayama in "Mojin Shokan" (Diary of a Blind Man) Right: More sado-masochistic images from "Ekibyo Ryukoki"







Above: The "Dance of Darkness." Hijikata's troupe "Asubesutokan" in a scene from "Geisenjo no Okugata." Left: The star dancer Yoko Ashikawa in a scene from the same production





Two scenes of erotic violence in Kara's play, "Giyaman no Orugoru" (the Glass Musical Box), directed by his wife Lee Reisen





Yoko Ashikawa playing the title role in "Geisenjo no Okugata"



Right, center, far right:
A combination of cabaret and grand guignol in Akaji Maro's "Arashi"

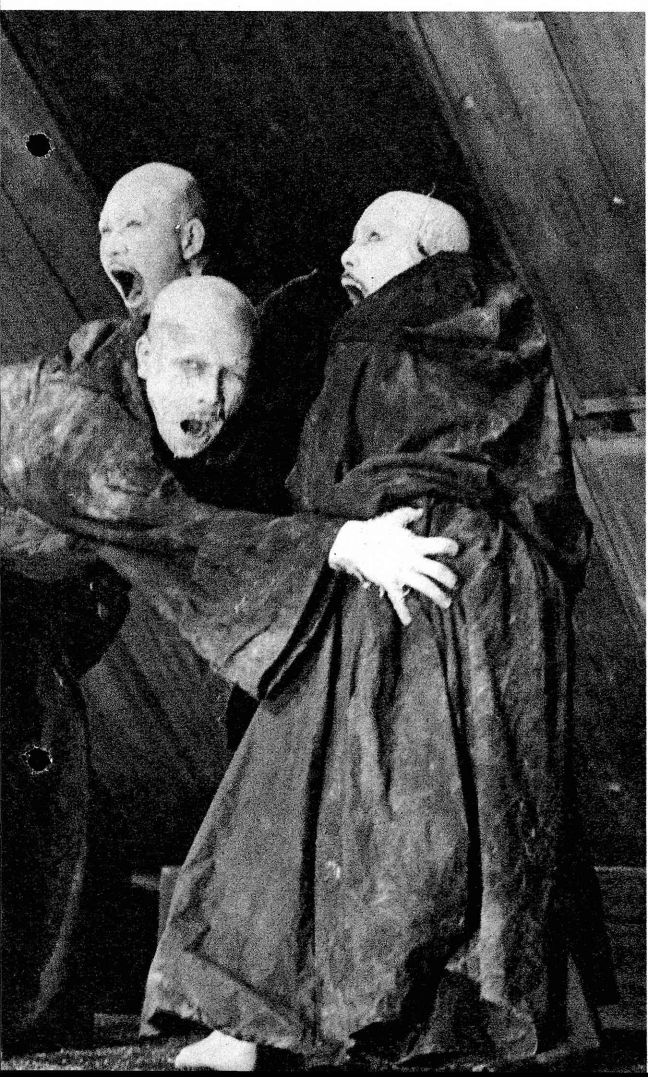




Left, below: The strenuous physical theatre of Suzuki in rehearsal











On this and opposite pages, Yoko Ashikawa shows her virtuosity in several scenes from the Asubesutokan's "Geisenjo no Okugata."





FROGS ON A TREE

Photos by Naotoshi Tejima

Little known behaviors of a rare species of frog have been brought to light by a naturalist-photographer.

His object of curiosity is *moriaogaeru* or arboreal green frog, which is indigenous to Japan and distributed in the mountainous regions of Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. This species, which is named as *Rhacophorus schlegelii arborea,* is a small creature, the male measuring 7.5 mm long and the female 9.5 mm on the average.

As its name indicates, *moriaogaeru* has a green or dark green back, with pretty irregular reddish brown speckles in some specimens. The belly is ashy white or yellowish light gray, with irregular, dark brown speckles in some.

The green frog usually lives on a tree but sometimes comes down to short grass or to the ground during the breeding season between April and June. The female frog gives out a cluster of white foam on the leaves or branches of a tree hanging over a pond or a puddle and shoots spawn into the foamy mass. Sometimes, the eggs are laid on the grass or the ground when more suitable places are not available.

Two breeding places in northern Honshu have been designated as natural monuments. These are Matsukawa in Iwate Prefecture and Hebusu Swamp in Fukushima Prefecture. The green frog is featured in the ¥50 postage stamp issued in 1976 as one of the nature conservation series.

Photographs on these pages were taken at Ongata in Hachioji City in the western suburbs of Metropolitan Tokyo.



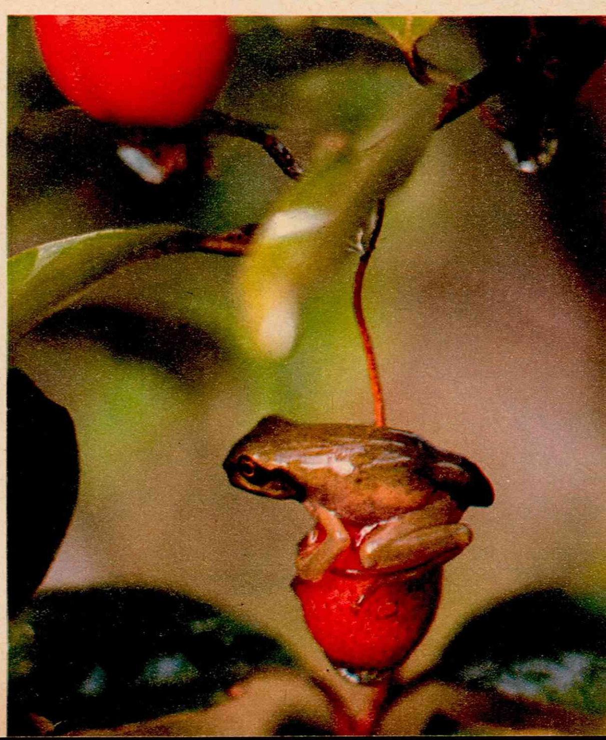
Arboreal green frogs are nocturnal in their habits. They have to be because they are slow in motion and have no weapons with which to fight enemies.



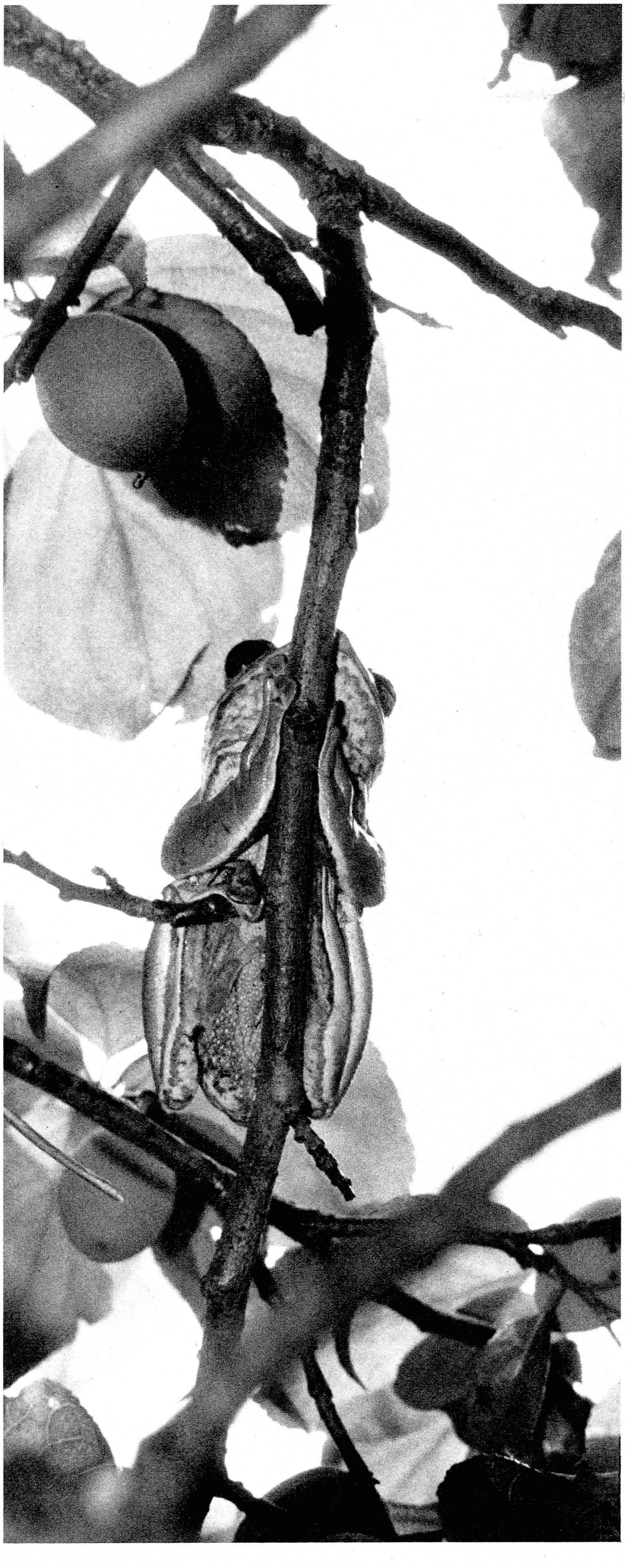
A green frog with his vocal sac bulging out as he prepares to croak



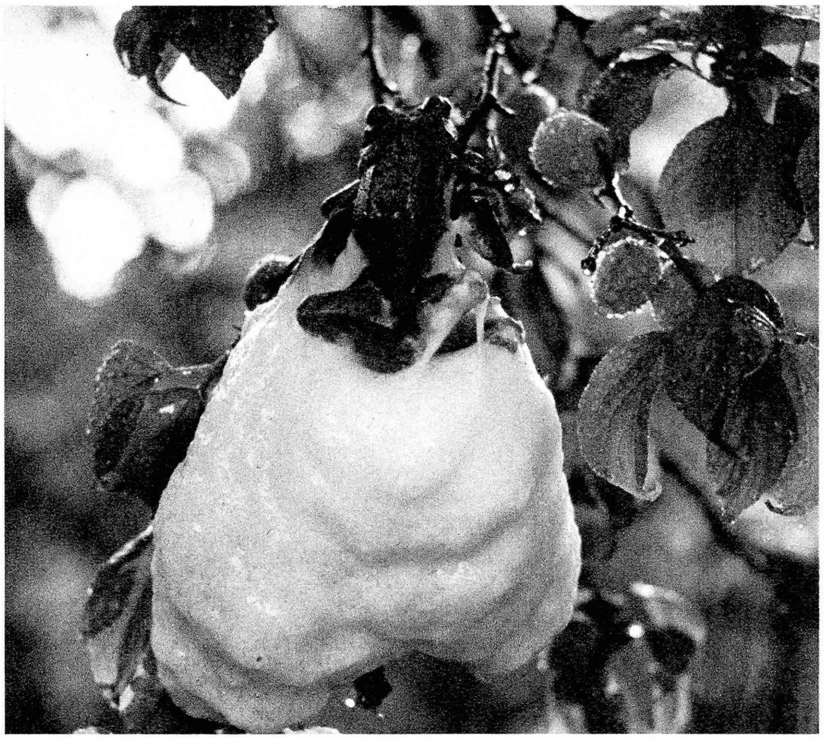




Above: A female frog (right) shoots spawn into a cluster of white foam. Several male frogs riding on her back whip up the foamy mass with hind legs. Right: A female frog carries a male companion biggyback prior to spawning. Far right: A tadpole gets a start in its terrestrial life when legs grow out of it. Its tail disappears in a few days. A tadpole of moriaogaeru metamorphoses into a young frog in two months.









Left and top: The green frog usually lives on a tree but sometimes comes down to short grass or to the ground during the breeding season. Center: The foamy cluster, which is about the same size as a grapefruit, contains 200 to 500 yellowish white eggs. Fertilized eggs grow into tiny tadpoles in a week or two and drop into a pond or a brook. Bottom: Postage stamp featuring moriaogaeru is popular among the philatelists.

Marathon for the Multitude

Photos by Japan Illustrated

ONE day last winter, a veritable sea of humanity filled the boulevard in front of the city hall of Ome, a suburban town west of Tokyo. The people — 10,710 of them — were the participants in the annual marathon race, for which the otherwise obscure town has become famous nation-wide.

The runners included men and women from all walks of life and from all parts of the country. The oldest of them was an octogenarian. There were some foreigners, too.

There were two courses: a 30-kilometer route for the general division and a 10-kilometer course for six categories of people — upper secondary school students, women, elderly people, etc. The main 30-kilometer course race was joined by 7,531 persons. Filling the 9-meter-wide road in front of the Ome Municipal Office, which was the starting point, the huge cluster of participants stretched about 300 meters long from the front line to the last.



Local high school girls hand-printed the numbered pieces of cloth for the 10,710 runners.

To avoid congestion at the starting time, the sponsors divided the runners into groups of 200 and arranged the clusters two meters apart. The string of groups was told to walk toward the starting line and when the front line of the procession reached the line, the whole aggregation was allowed to dash off. It took three minutes before the last of the runners ran past the starting line.

The course was a relatively even asphalt road with a difference of 59 meters between the highest and lowest points. The temperature at the starting time at noon was 10.4 degrees C. — ideal for a marathon. Members of the front group consisting of the invited runners ran a close race but for most of the other participants, the whole event was just for fun. They ran along in a pleasant mood exchanging words with those on the return course or waving hands at the cheering people on the sidewalk.

In 1967, when the Ome Marathon was inaugurated, there were only 182 participants. They included Kokichi Tsuburaya, the bronze medalist in the marathon event of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Later, as the marathon craze spread through Japan, the number of participants increased year after year. Last year, when the Ome Marathon and the Boston Marathon were linked through "sister arrangements," the number swelled to 7,518. This year, the participants finally topped the 10,000 mark.

Among them were two invited American runners — Jack Fultz, winner of last year's Boston Marathon, and Mike Burke, who placed seventh. Also included were Japan's foremost marathon runners such as Akiro Usami, Yoshiaki Unetani and Nobuaki Takao.

Conspicuous in the surging crowd was a group of artists called Red Snakes, who had come all the way from Boston. The contingent comprised nine Americans led by Kaji Aso, 40, professor of oil painting at the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts. They wore shirts with marks of red snake in a coil. Aso said that when he witnessed the Boston Marathon in 1968, he was deeply impressed with the athletic vitality shown by the runners and the warm, friendly atmosphere in which onlookers applauded the losers more loudly than the winners. Since then, he has taken part in every one of the Boston Marathon races along with his students.

Also attracting attention were 18 women who won gold medals in the 1976 Montreal Olympics as members of the Hitachi Team for women's volleyball games. They took part in the Ome race to celebrate the victory they had won in the Japanese women's volleyball championships just a day before. Though apparently fatigued with the previous day's exertions, all of them completed the 10-kilometer run.

The hero of the day was 83-year-old Sueichi Hirota. Though running rather slowly, he reached the goal with a steady gait. "I still can run with young people! I'd like to join next year's race, too." he said.

In the main 30-kilometer race, Yoshiro Ajisawa, 25, won with a time of 1:34:36.0, beating the invited runners, both Japanese and foreign. Fultz came in fifth, and Burke finished 53rd.

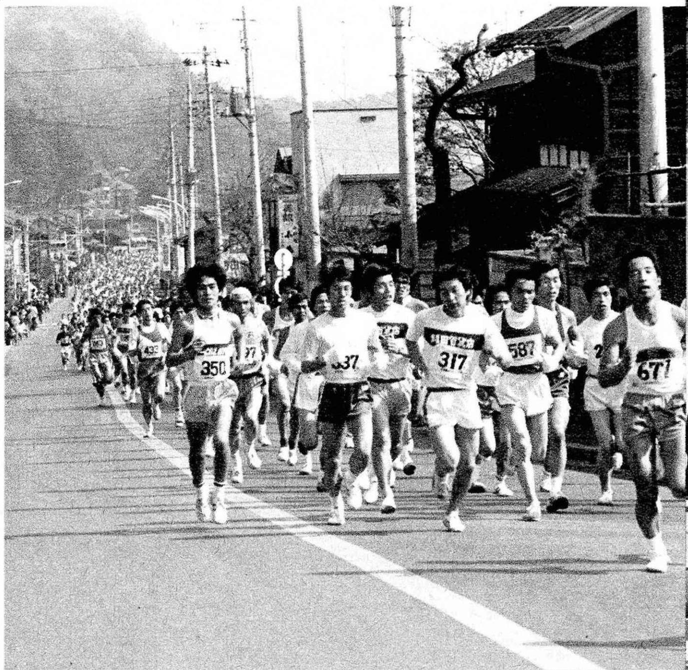
The goal area was filled with runners, who came in one after another. All underwent checkups by officials and, with a broad smile, received "certificates" testifying that they ran the whole distance. They complimented each other for completing the grueling run and promised to meet each other again at Ome next year.

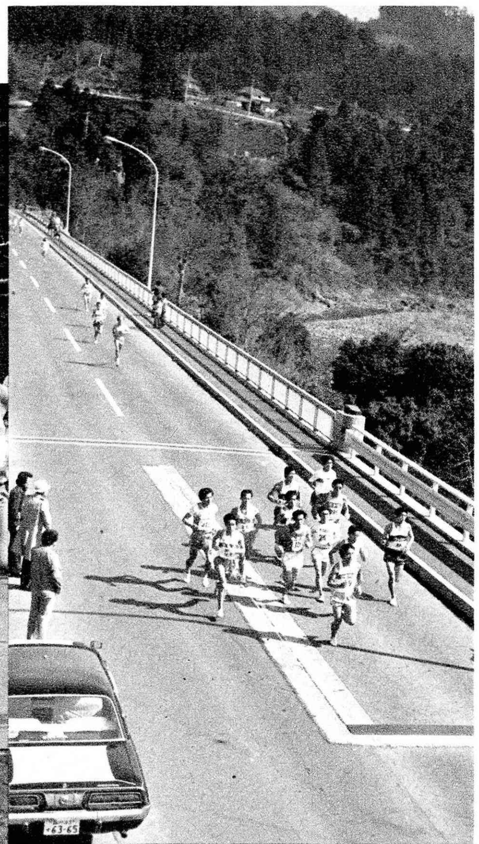


A stream of humanity runs past the city hall plaza as the race gets under way.



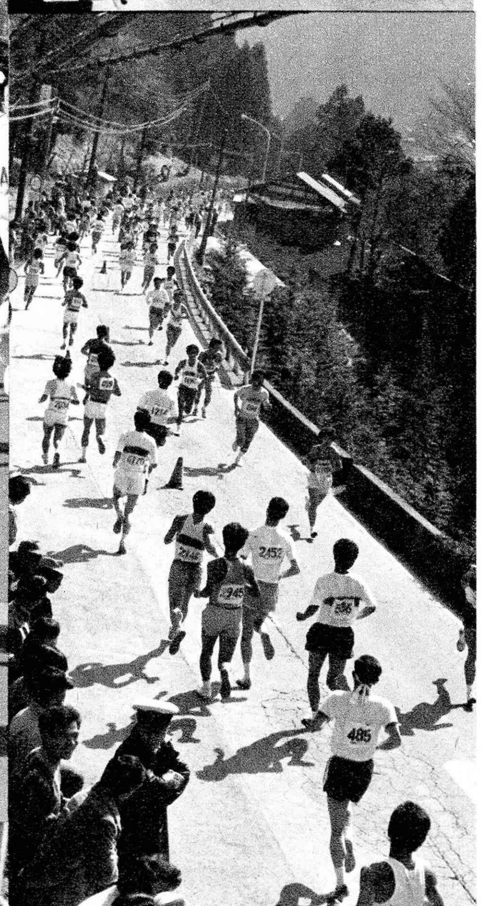
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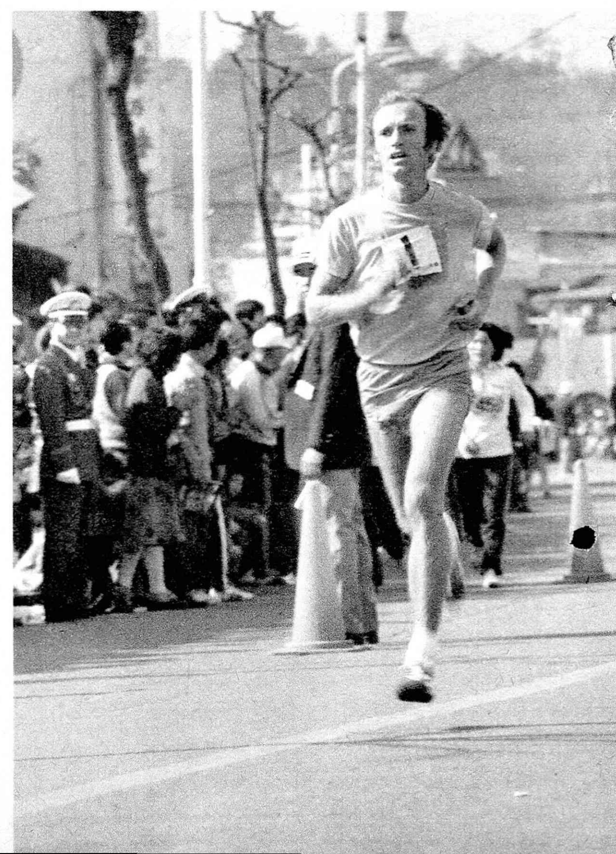


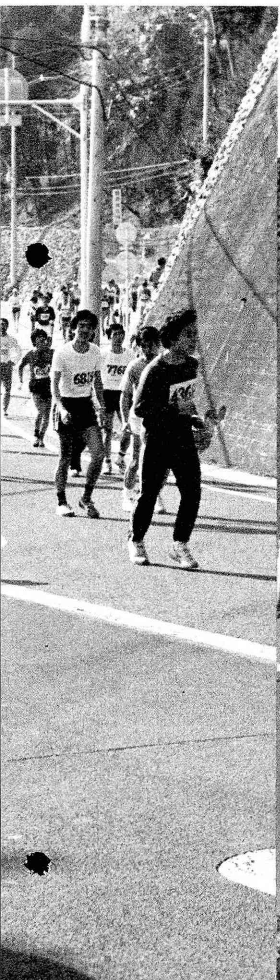


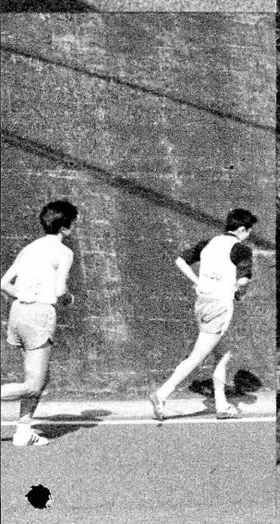


On and on, the runners tear along the course.



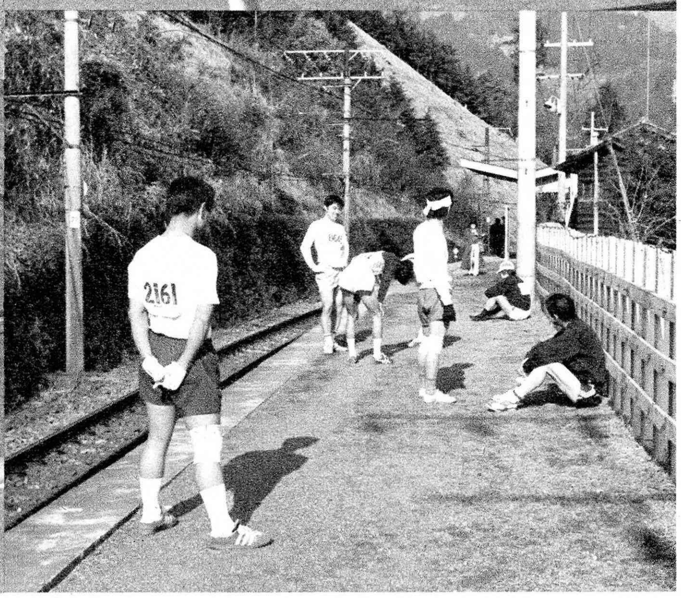


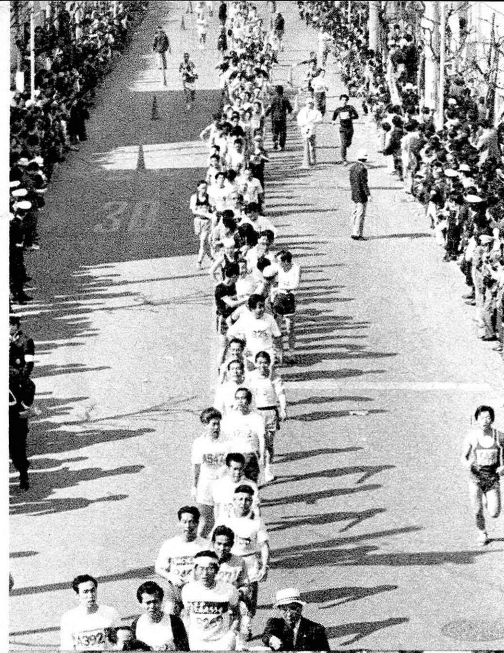




Some didn't make it.

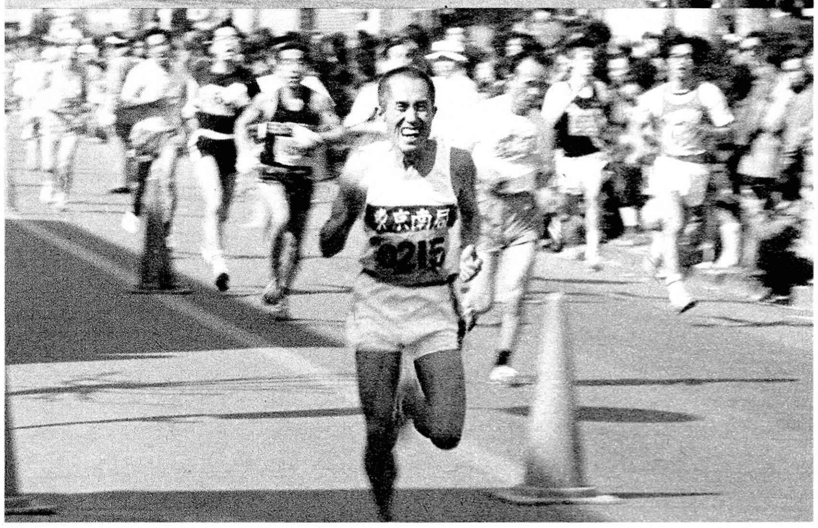


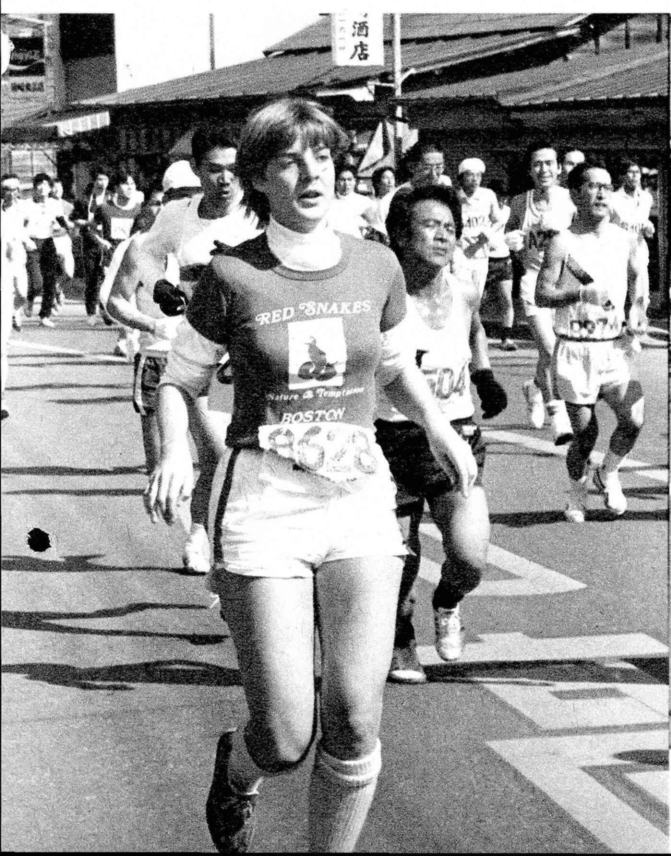




Participants line up for the certificates.
Winners, respectively, of the 30- and 10-kilometer courses.







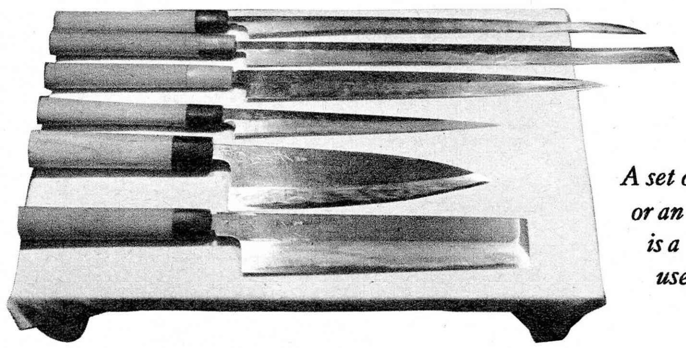




Conspicuous among the contestants: winner of last year's Boston Marathon, a Red Snakes member, Montreal Olympics volleyball medalists, a tired sexagenarian

Artistry in Raw Fish Cuisine

Photos by Japan Illustrated



A set of dressing knives carried by a chef or an itinerant cook. Second from the front is a 'deba,' the fifth is a knife used for slicing fish bars.

An English-language best-seller published in Tokyo a few years ago carried the title, "Japan: It's Not All Raw Fish." It is a collection of hilarious anecdotes recounting the experiences and reactions of an American businessman newly assigned to Tokyo. In this book, the author tells in detail how he was shocked, mystified and even angered by some of the customs and manners of the Japanese he came across and then how he gradually reconciled himself to the "cultural shock."

The Japanese practice of eating uncooked fish meat must appear quite odd to the Westerner — odd enough to make the title of a book. A seagirt nation, the Japanese consume an extraordinary amount of fish and quite a large portion of it raw. They appreciate uncooked fish cuisine all the more because it stands for freshness of the ingredients.

The Japanese eat raw, tender slices of fish meat called *sashimi* as hors d'oeuvres or regular side dish for their rice meal. Fish meat dressed artistically is a much prized accompaniment for Japan's national drink, sake.

While any fish of the sea or river can be served as *sashimi* provided it is fresh and of adequate size, the most popular fish varieties are tuna and sea bream. These are followed by yellowtail, flatfish, bonito and blowfish. Abalone and other shellfish as well as squid and lobsters are also popular, but expensive, ingredients.

The way of dressing fish meat into *sashimi* varies from one species to another. Let us here consider the case of tuna which is regarded as supreme in color, taste and texture. First, the cook removes the head and the entrails and cuts the body into three parts — two flanks and a thin sheet along the spine. The fillets are then cut into square bars. Each bar is cut into slices one or two centimeters thick.

The process sounds simple but requires a lot of skill. The quality of the dish depends largely on the way the cook manipulates his slender cooking knife reserved specially for *sashimi* dressing.

The crimson or pink slices of the tuna meat are then arranged on a round, square or rectangular plate. The standard formula calls for placing the slices in clusters of three, five and seven pieces, respectively. Some fresh vegetables or seaweeds are put beside them. These garnishings are called *tsuma* and the most common among them is finely shredded white radish. Others include green or violet leaves of beefsteak plant, tiny yellow chrysanthemum flowers, laver and other kinds of seaweed and small unripe cucumbers still bearing flowers.

"I'm just the *tsuma* of *sashimi,*" the Japanese are often heard to say with modesty, either real or false. The cliche implies that the man saying so considers himself an unworthy auxiliary to some important person. Although it sounds quite apt for describing the relationship between *sashimi* and *tsuma,* the remark is misleading in that the vegetable garnishings are a very important part of this cuisine. A *sashimi* dish without *tsuma* would look unappetizing as it lacks an essential quality — visual appeal.

Sashimi is eaten after dipping each slice in soy sauce mixed with grated rootstalk of *wasabi* or Japanese horseradish. This is a peculiar vegetable that grows only on a sandy highland farm washed by a constant flow of cold limpid water. It has a very sharp tang and appetizing flavor. Because of its short supply, *wasabi,* especially those of high quality, are fairly expensive. As a result, a great deal of synthetic product is used nowadays.

While most people dissolve the grated horseradish in soy sauce, gourmets, real or self-appointed, scrupulously put a lick of the condiment on each slice of the fish meat before dipping it in soy sauce. This way of eating, they insist, enhances *wasabi's* tang and fragrance.

Sashimi is served either singly or in an assortment of two or more different kinds of fish. The most popular combination comprises the meat of tuna, squid and yellowtail.

There are some uncommon varieties in raw fish cuisine. One is fish served half-alive. This is prepared mostly with sea bream, "the king of fish," as shown in the color photo on Page 25. The cook carves out the meat and slices it in regular *sashimi* fashion while carefully preserving the head, spine, skin and the entrails intact. Then he neatly puts back the sliced meat to the upper half of the fish's body. Meat from the other half is placed in the foreground of the plate. Diners sample the delicacy while watching the hapless fish twitch and jerk nervously.

The culinary curiosity, it seems, has developed from the Japanese people's obsession with the freshness of the fish they eat. Live-fish dinner is a special attraction at exclusive sea food restaurants and seaside resort inns.

Another variety is carp *sashimi,* which is served after briefly soaking the thinly sliced meat in ice-cold water. With this treatment, the carp meat slices curl up and turn whitish. Carp *sashimi,* called *arai,* is served with a special sauce made of soybean paste, vinegar and mustard. The cold water treatment is also applied to some sea fish, notably sea bass.

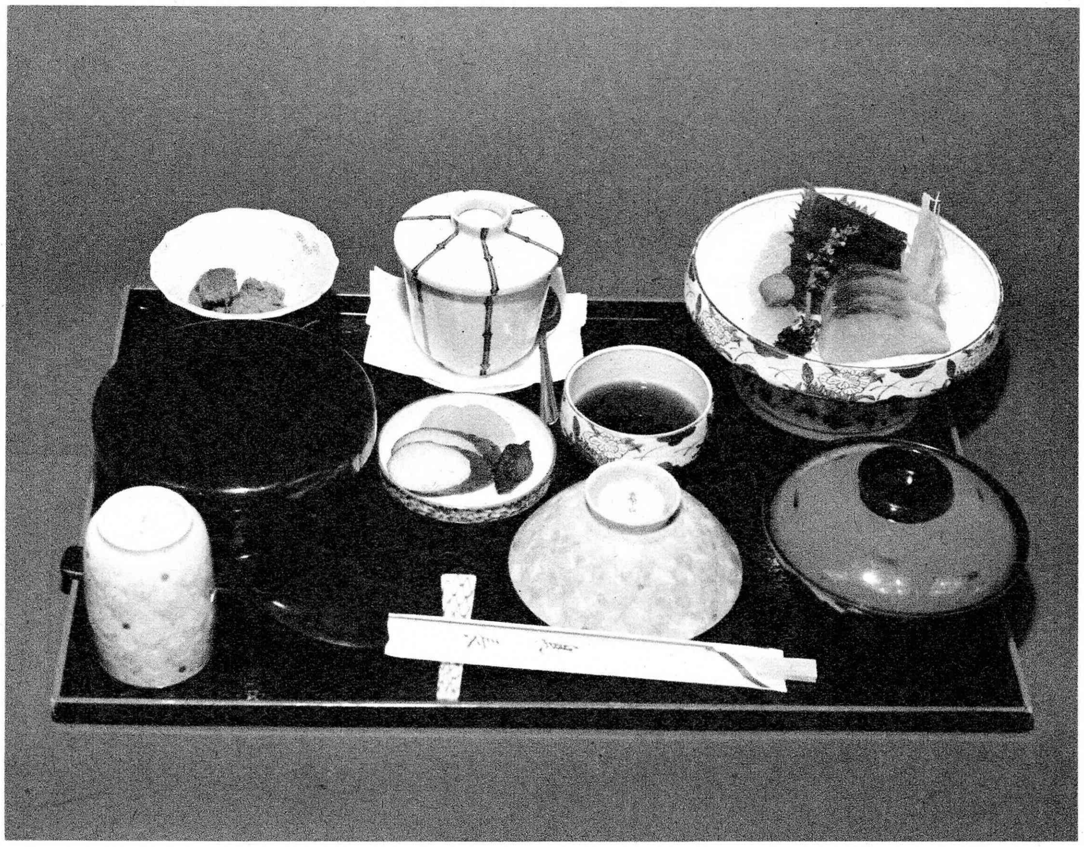
Still another variety is blowfish *sashimi.* Blowfish meat is sliced into very thin pieces and arranged in multiple circles on a colorful round plate. The designs and patterns of the porcelain receptacle show through the almost transparent slices of the fish meat, enhancing the charm of this special dish. *Fugu sashi,* as it is called, is by far the most aesthetic of raw fish dishes. Incidentally, *fugu* eating is restricted to the colder season — from October to February.

As most blowfish contain poisonous substances in their entrails, only trained cooks with state license are authorized to practice *fugu sashi* dressing. The Japanese jocularly call blowfish *teppo.* The reasoning is that the fish is as deadly as *teppo* — the musket.

Bonito *sashimi,* another gourmet's delight, is prepared with bonito caught in warm Pacific coast waters in early summer. Unlike other sliced fish meat dishes, this variety is served with the fish skin unremoved. A chunk of brownish-red bonito flesh is broiled slightly over straw fire and served in thicker slices than ordinary *sashimi.* Also unlike other raw fish dishes, bonito *sashimi* is eaten with soy sauce seasoned with grated ginger and/or sliced garlic. A liking for bonito *sashimi* will elevate one to the rank of sophisticated connoisseurs of Japanese food.

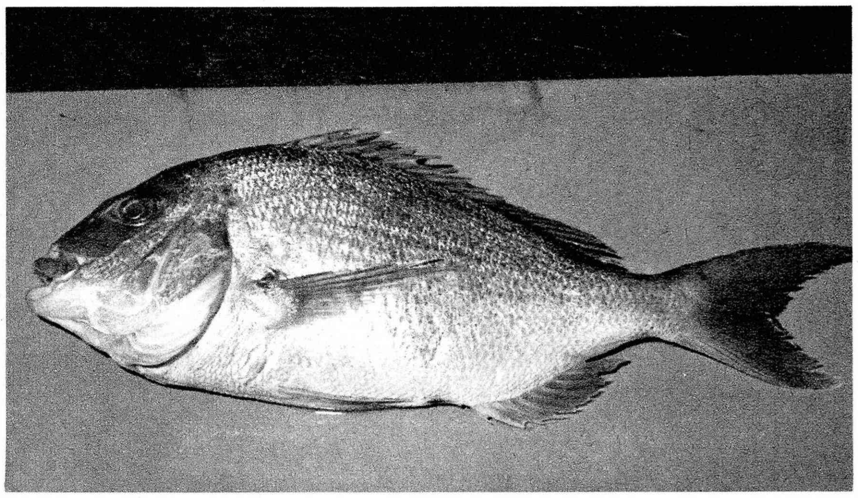
Sashimi is an essential part of Japanese cuisine. No formal Japanese dinner is conceivable without this exotic dish.

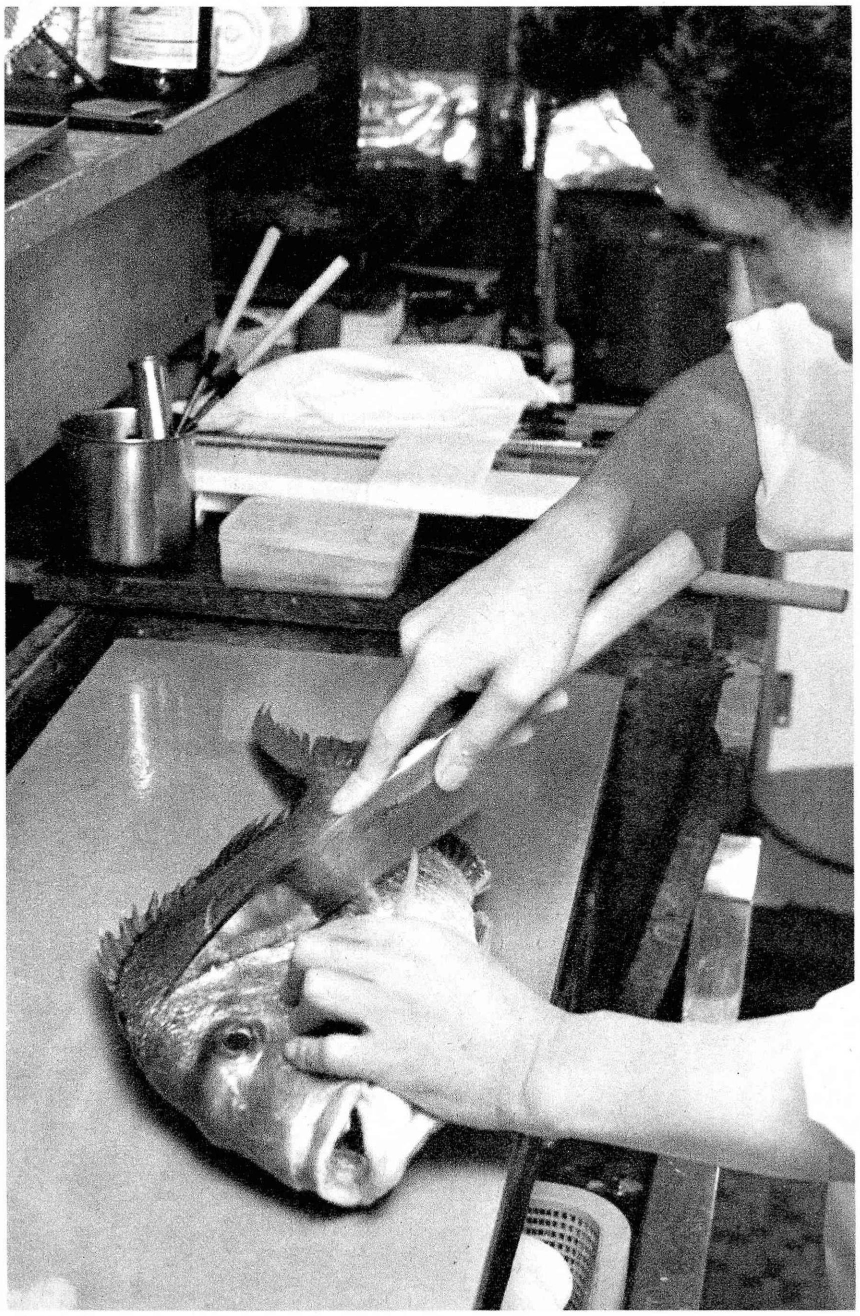
Sushi, one of the trio of typically Japanese delicacies along with *tempura* and *sukiyaki,* is, in a word, *sashimi* placed on morsels of vinegared rice. This food provides adventurous foreigners with an easy avenue toward an appreciation of *sashimi.* In fact, many foreign gourmets are enticed into the weird realm of raw fish eating through some training in *sushi* sampling.



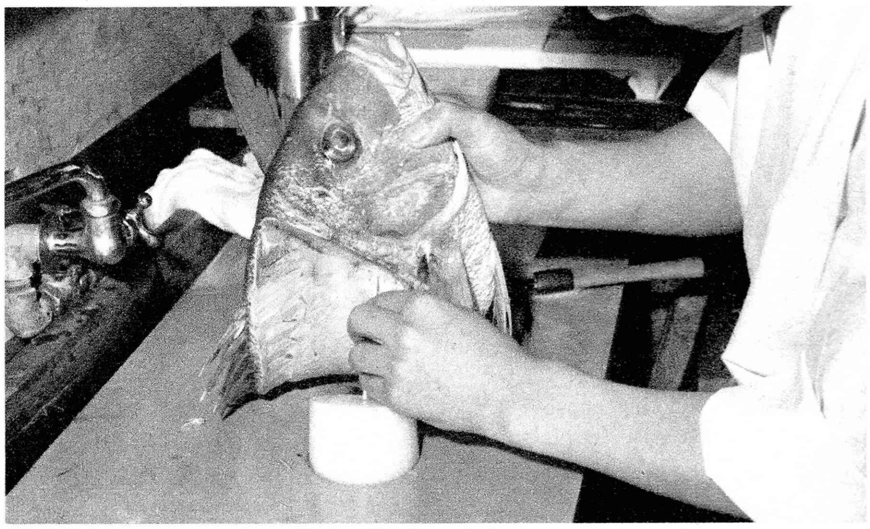
Above: A popular table d'hote called 'sashimi teishoku' consists of a sashimi dish (top right) accompanied with a small dish of soy sauce, beanpaste soup, rice and a few additional dishes. Below: Sashimi is a common choice for after-dark snacks.

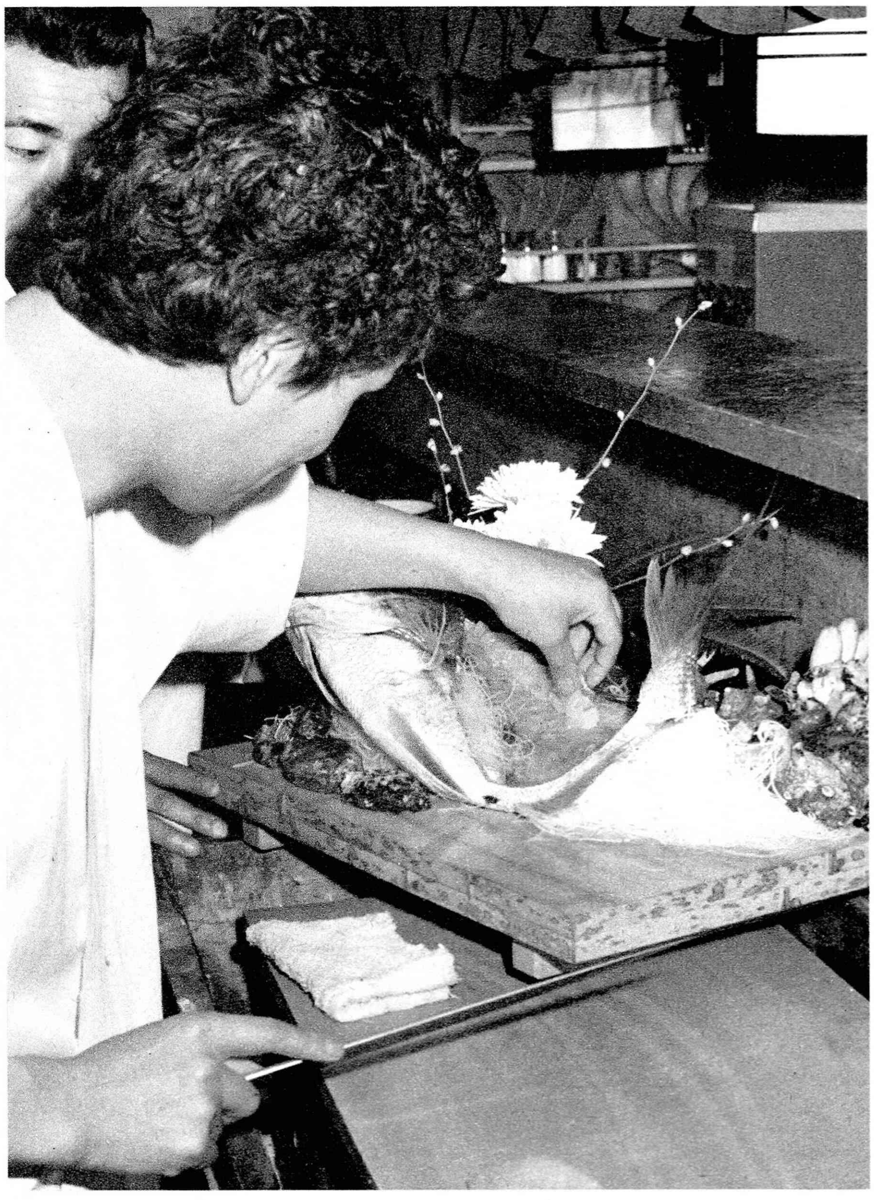












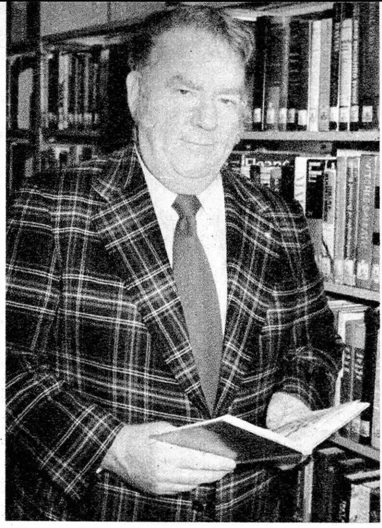
Dressing a Sea Bream for 'ikezukuri'

Top left: The fish, four years old, weighs 2.8 kilograms (6.2 pounds). This unusually big one is placed on the dressing board after being hit on the head. Bottom left: The chef, Mr. Akio Nishimura of Restaurant Shimacho in Tokyo, gives the first cut at the gills. Top right: One flank meat is separated from the spine with a carving knife called 'deba.' Middle right: The head is erected with a long bamboo skewer which is stuck in a block of white radish. Then each of the fillets is cut lengthwise into twin bars. Each bar is sliced into one-centimeter-thick pieces, like those placed in front of the wooden board in the photo bottom right. Then slices of the fillet are carefully arranged on the upper half of the fish's body. The completely finished cuisine is shown on the opposite page.





Above: A beautifully-decorated dish of 'the king of fish.' Set together is a lobster with its meat cut into bite size. The shellfish clustered around the fish and lobster are top shells. A wasabi rootstalk, grated wasabi condiment and a metal grating tool are grouped in the foreground. Flowers and grass — such as the peach and chrysanthemum flowers arranged in the background — are used to add seasonal flavor. Other garnishings — shredded white radish, sliced cucumbers and seaweeds — are all eatable. Left: This assortment includes, clockwise, tuna, yellowtail, sea bream and cuttlefish, the last item prepared in the shape of a white chrysanthemum flower, with a real flower placed in the center.



Still Another Lesson from the Orient

By Don Maloney

The author of this article is an American businessman who did a joint venture stint in Japan for several years until last year. He won instant fame with his book, "Japan: It's Not All Raw Fish" — a collection of hilarious anecdotes recounting his experiences in this country.

STUDYING things Oriental these days really seems to be the thing to do. Especially if you yourself are not one bit Oriental. Not since the days when Marco Polo brought spaghetti back to tuck under tomato sauce, sausages, and meat balls has the Western world seemed so interested in what's going on over on the other side of the Pacific Ocean.

I mean almost anywhere here in Cleveland, Ohio, you can stumble into an arrangement of flowers all hanging off one side of the vase. And even outside of Cleveland, everyone appears to be working up one dish or another from old Oriental recipes. You know what I mean, cooking entrees from food we used to throw away, or not cooking something at all, just eating it.

But, with all this going on—it's sad to report—I think we are overlooking some of the really great lessons the Orient has been trying to teach us for years.

I'll give you just one example of what I mean.

There's no sense in me trying to remember at this moment exactly where it was that I read it, but I did read some time back about a study conducted at some American university that showed one big reason why big U.S. cities are supposedly in all sorts of trouble.

The problem—according to the study's findings — is simple: There are just too many people in our big cities.

Now what I thought was especially interesting about all this was the fact that the researchers didn't even have to visit one big city to figure it all out. What they did—as I recall the report, anyway—was to get a big cardboard box and put a couple of mice in it. While just the two of them had the big box all to themselves, harmony reigned and everything was peachy creamy.

Then, a few at a time, the researchers added more mice to the box. And, each time the additional rodents were introduced to the scene, trouble came with them. They fought over food, over mates, even over what section of the big box each called home.

So, the study concluded, too many people in our cities are just like too many mice in that cardboard box. Trouble, trouble, and more trouble. We'd better get out of the cities, they decided, and head for the hills and the equivalent of bigger cardboard boxes.

At the time I read this, I was quite ready to take the advice. After all, I'd seen what happened to a mouse's lungs when he smoked three packs of cigarettes a day in earlier studies. And, I'd heard of how some mice suffered nervous breakdowns after they drank two gallons of coffee a day. So, why should I doubt that a box chock-full of mice would raise all sorts of urban hell?

But, before I could move out of Cleveland of my own free will, my company moved me—to a six-year assignment in Tokyo. Remember now, Cleveland is one of those cities that has had its problems. At one time or another, you could read in the morning Plain Dealer newspaper about how some poor soul was mugged on his way home from his favorite tavern, or how some city bandit snatched a purse or picked a pocket or two on the Rapid Transit, or even how two drivers arguing over a single shopping center parking space ended their disagreement by pounding each other's head in with bumperjacks.

And, if Cleveland was like a cardboard box full of mice, I reasoned, then Tokyo had to be more like a matchbox full of elephants. After all, there are more than 11 million people—give or take a few million—in Tokyo, more than six times as many souls who call Cleveland home. And that's even before two of them were crossed off by bumperjacks. So, I was a little concerned about my safety in the much more crowded city.

THE United Nations, in fact, says that Tokyo is the world's second most populous city, behind only Shanghai. But, take my word for it, the U.N. is more than somewhat mistaken. The U.N. counts only the people in the street and the ones in homes and office buildings, I'm sure. Tokyo would be number one, I'll bet, if they also counted the five or six million Japanese who are riding the subways there at any given moment.

Interestingly enough, my initial worries about my personal safety in those Tokyo subways turned out to be completely unfounded. I was really worried because even with policemen riding the Rapid Transit trains in Cleveland, there were those occasional purse-snatching and pocket-picking problems. In Tokyo, I'd heard, there were *no* policemen on the subways. Then, I found out why they were missing on my first underground trip.

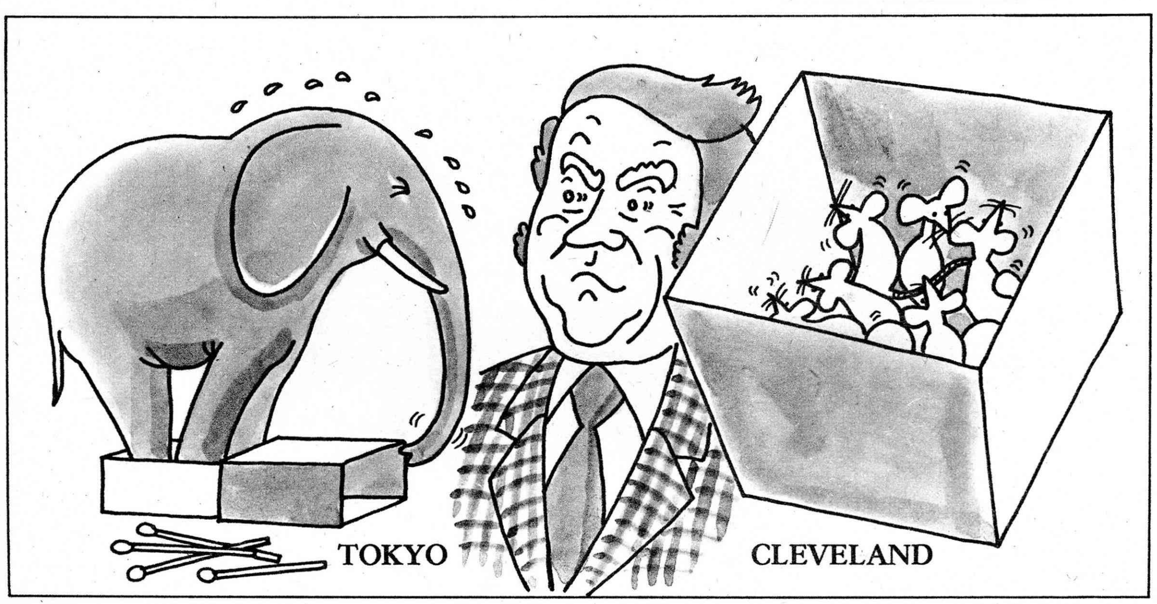
There are no cops on Tokyo subways because there's no *room* for cops on those trains. But, that's perfectly OK. With all those people jammed into every subway car, you can't get your *own* hands in your *own* pockets.

And quickly I discovered that it is impossible to be bumperjacked in Tokyo. Not over a parking space, anyway—there are none. Besides, traffic moves so slowly in Tokyo shopping areas that you can leave your car right in the middle of any street while you run in and make a purchase. You can easily get back to your car before the lane moves.

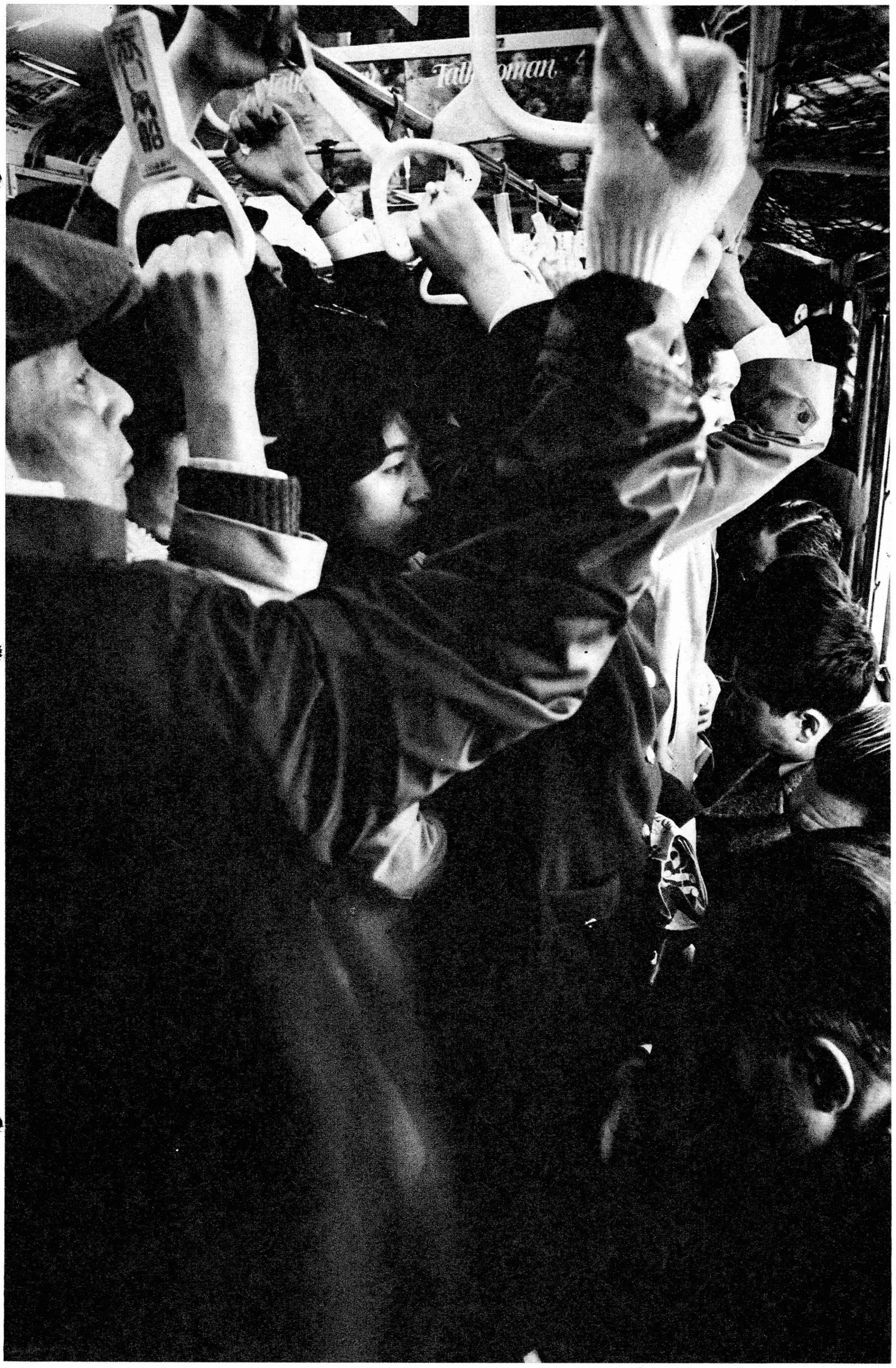
Once when I was in a Tokyo bar, I had my two shots of Johnnie Walker Black and went out into the night. Dark as it was, I had not a worry in the world about being mugged. Bar prices in Tokyo are so steep that everybody knows nobody coming *out* of one has any money left worth stealing. If there's any danger at all in Tokyo, it's to people on their way *in* to a bar or cabaret.

So that you can get a general idea of how many people there really are in Japan, ponder this: The entire land area of the Japanese islands is about equal to about 90% of the land area of the State of California.

Got that? OK, now subtract 80% of *that,* because that's how much of Japan is taken up by uninhabitable mountain ranges. So, what's left is



"If Cleveland was like a cardboard box full of mice, then Tokyo had to be more like a matchbox full of elephants."



Too many mice in the box? (Photo by Yasuo Kubo)

20% of 90% of California, or a mere 18% of that state's territory.

Now—we're not finished yet—subtract half of *that* for rice paddies and sweet potato fields. You're left now, you see, with only 9% of California.

Now, here's the clincher: Into that 9% of California, stuff half of the population of the entire United States!

That's how crowded Japan is—more than 110,000,000 people in an area less than 10% that of California.

What I'm trying to get around to is that I think the university researchers with their cardboard box and mice have committed a very serious offense against American cities with needless scare tactics that themselves are part of the reason the cities are suffering.

What those researchers should do is to visit Japan—particularly Tokyo—and see how well everyone gets along with each other there despite the crowded conditions. They would learn still one more lesson from the Orient.

And, they would discover their earlier mistake: They didn't put enough mice in that box.







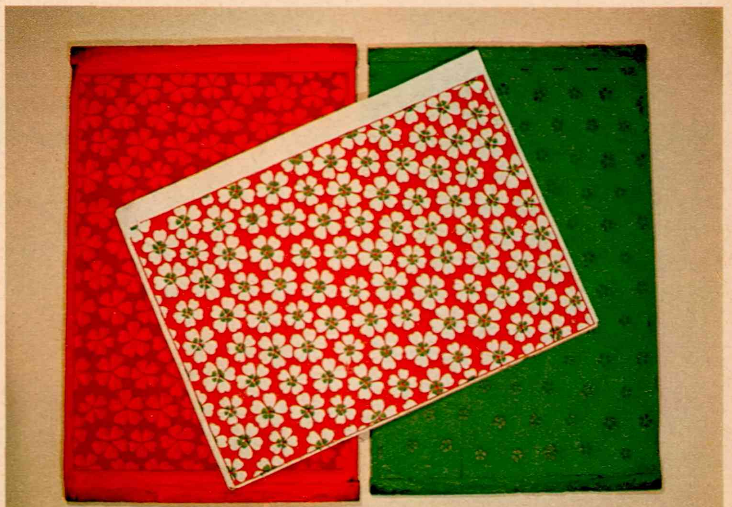
Chiyogami

By Patricia Massy
Photos by Toru Mizuno





Kaleidoscope



A girl's treasures: dolls, boxes, and books made of chiyogami, the patterned paper of old Edo
Right: This dichromatic flower pattern sheet is produced with the two woodblocks placed underneath.

In the old downtown of Tokyo, as one walks from Sendagi subway station past the nondescript little shops so characteristic of Tokyo's backstreets, there suddenly appears a most incongruously gay window display. Everything is made of brightly patterned papers: a tiny chest of drawers, a folding screen, a group of *origami* style dolls, all prettily arranged on a red felt cloth. A young girl who also cannot resist the magical attraction of this window has stopped her bike to gaze in fascination.

But just slide open the shop doors, and oh my! inside it is a veritable paper box crammed full with paper treasures. There are more boxes of all shapes and sizes, and boxes within boxes. Dolls half a meter high and dolls measuring barely two centimeters. Dainty patterned notebooks, calendars, fans, *origami* packets, chopstick envelopes. Little shells covered with floral paper. Tiny, tiny accordion pleated books that unfold with miniature *ukiyoe* pictures. Entering this shop, one feels like Alice in a fantastic paper land.

At the back and one side of this cubbyhole, are high tiers of shelves with thick stacks of the colorful papers used to make these charming trinkets. The name of the paper is *chiyo-gami,* and of the shop, Isetatsu. Since the Edo Period (1600-1867), the two have brightened the drab life that was the fate of most girls. "If you look carefully," says Tatsugoro Hirose, the present head of Isetatsu, "in *chiyogami* you can find the essence of Edo. Just looking at it, you fly back over the years. Strange, isn't it, that although no one now living knows the Edo Period, we feel an extraordinary nostalgia for *chiyogami.* "

From the time paper-making was introduced from China over a thousand years ago, paper has been cherished for its beauty as well as for its gift to the arts of calligraphy and painting. In the Heian Period (9th-12th centuries) when writing was so popular a pastime that a lady would prefer to express her thoughts in an elegantly composed letter to the occupant of the next room than address her in person, lovely ways to decorate the stationery were developed. Besides being dyed in soft colors, it could be given suggestions of landscape scenes in fine brush strokes or different paper could be pressed together in a collage suggestive of clouds and mountains. Spatter paint (spraying paint over a leaf or stencil so that the silhouette remains) and other stencil techniques were also employed with finesse. However, until the Edo Period such beautiful papers were the exclusive hobby of aristocrats who had them made to order.

Then in the mid-18th century appeared the first multicolored woodblock prints of Harunobu. Edo, established as the seat of the shogunate to balance the power of the ancient imperial capital of Kyoto, had had to rely heavily on Kyoto for culture in everything from cake making to painting. But now it could boast of an art all its own. *Ukiyoe* with their strong lines, bold composition, and vivid colors were the perfect mode of expression for the rough and ready Edokko. Along with pictures of courtesans and actors, *ukiyoe* artists also made the patterned papers that came to be called *chiyogami.* Both were cherished as souvenirs by visitors to Edo who took them back to their families waiting in the countryside.

To say that the *ukiyoe* artists made *chiyogami* means that they created the designs, which were then carved out and printed by special artisans — the same division of talents that went into the production of *ukiyoe.* At Isetatsu there are several designs by such famous artists as Hiroshige. Unfortunately, though, few original copies of old *chiyogami* exist. Unlike *ukiyoe* which would be kept from generation to generation, sometimes tucked away at the bottom of a chest of drawers to be happily discovered a 100 years later, *chiyogami* was used immediately for decorating boxes and books or wrapping up presents or making little envelopes to hold sachet and cosmetics.

The first designs seem to have been congratulatory symbols that stand for long life and happiness. Among these are the crane, tortoise, pine, bamboo, and plum blossom. From this simple beginning developed an extraordinary variety of pattern. Isetatsu has about 500 in active production and an estimated 500 more in its collection. There are garden landscapes and scenes of Edo, crazy quilt patterns showing children at play throughout the months of the year, and pictures of famous historical samurai or of sumo wrestlers. Equivalent to pages from a picture book, such patterns were conversation pieces to be shown to friends or to hang on the wall. In the same category fall the pictures of toys, household furniture, hairstyles, and arrangements of the alphabet. Besides being pretty, these *chiyogami* had a real educational value for the children who learned to read and express themselves as they cut out their favorite pictures and played with them.

At this time, Kabuki was at its height of popularity. The Edokko's passion for Kabuki was so great that just because a certain actor had made a big hit on the stage, the color or pattern of his costume would become the fashion of the day. It is therefore quite natural that a popular actor's crest or the motif of his dressing gown would appear on *chiyogami,* too. Elaborate

scenes were also depicted, running in sets of three to even 12. Some were meant to be folded into a semblance of a stage on which children could enact the drama with portraits of actors cut out from another sheet. There also were papers with the makeup, props, and wigs that belong to the stage world.

Chiyogami indeed reveal the essence of Edo, as Tatsugoro Hirose says. Here we can see what the Edokko saw and loved, the simple pastimes and the simple pleasures from the intricate hairstyles to the long handled pipes and a game of backgammon. Here we learn of their sense of humorous chic: small parallel dashes scattered over a monochrome background represent *geta* marks left in the snow; a scythe *(kama),* a circle *(wa),* and the letter "*nu*" seem a strange combination until it occurs that they form a pun "*kamawanu*"—don't give a damn. Here we can find the sophistication of taste that is so characteristic of Edo: bold, carefree designs with a smart use of color; simplification of pattern for an eye-catching effect. Even flowers, fans, and dolls are arranged in striking patterns that have lost none of their impact and, in fact, appear quite modern today.

Although *chiyogami* blossomed among the common people, it was equally cherished in the mansions of the aristocrats. Ladies-in-waiting were set to printing the papers, or the artisans were called in specially to produce a personally designed pattern. One of the great gentleman-designers of *chiyogami* was Matsudaira Sadanobu of the great Matsudaira clan. Among his many outstanding compositions is the type called "Moon Shadow," a two-tone print of branches resembling a shadow thrown by moonlight.

So it was that *chiyogami* brought joy to the daughters of samurai as well as the grocer. For the aristocrats, it helped break the tedium of their monotonous existence; for the local girls it was one of the few forms of decoration they could afford. *Chiyogami* crafts became so much a part of everyday life that they were considered among a woman's necessary accomplishments as were flower arrangement and sewing. Nowadays *chiyogami* crafts can be bought ready-made, but back then they were all put together at home. A woman's taste was revealed in her choice of patterns, or when her daughter's work showed signs of maturity, aha! it was time to look for a husband for her.

Besides cutting, folding, and pasting *chiyogami* into all sorts of practical little containers, they loved to create paper dolls. Because the dolls were usually modeled after young women *(ane-sama),* they were called *ane-sama* dolls.
During the Edo Period, the style of kimono and even of the hair of both men and women was strictly regulated according to class and age. But while playing with *ane-sama,* a girl could pretend to be anyone she wanted to, whether it was an elegant princess or a sumptuously dressed courtesan. Or she could have fun tying up all those extraordinary hairstyles and practicing the various *obi* bows. These simple *origami* type of dolls that transported girls beyond the confines of feudal society developed in modern times into the art of paper figurines.

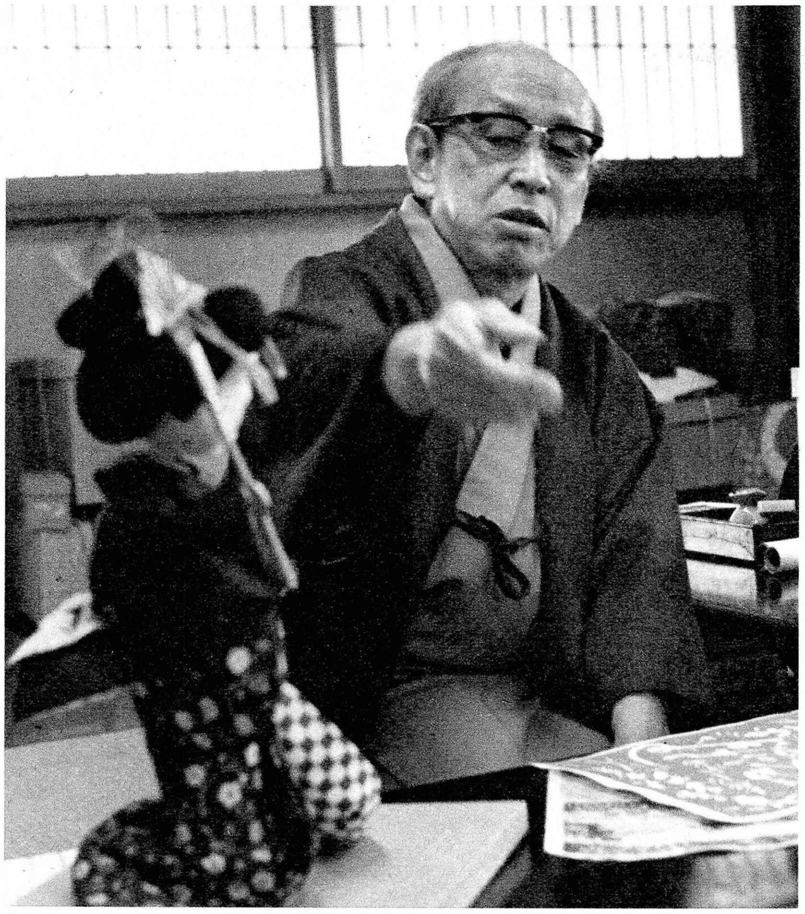
In order to preserve the knowledge of *chiyogami* crafts, which until recently had been handed down from mother to daughter, Tatsugoro established a *chiyogami* school near Isetatsu where classes are conducted everyday. One of the students says she saw *chiyogami* on T.V. and was immediately caught by the charming patterns. Then when she went to buy some paper at Isetatsu, she heard about the classes. "It's been two years since I joined," she says. "My house is full of *chiyogami* boxes and dolls, but there's still so much to learn. Envelopes for chopsticks and gift money are such a nice way to show your friends that you care." She actually used the word *kokoro,* literally to have heart, and thus unconsciously stated the essence of *chiyogami*—to have heart, i.e. tender feeling, for all the little things one uses everyday. Often have I lent a magazine or book to have it returned neatly inserted in a jacket of pretty paper. The borrower was not merely trying to avoid unpleasant thought should the book be soiled. It was the intrinsic value that was considered, for the monetary value was negligible. How precious that paper made the book!

Of the many *chiyogami* makers of the Edo Period, Isetatsu is the only one that has continued to this day. It was founded by Tatsugoro's great-grandfather who had started out working for an *ukiyoe-chiyogami* dealer. Two disasters brought about the disappearance of the other *chiyogami* specialists: the Great Earthquake of 1923 and the past war, both of which destroyed most of Tokyo. On the eve of the earthquake, an irreplaceable set of woodblocks for a planned collector's edition of Edo patterns had just been delivered to the Hirose home when the house came crashing down and fire broke loose. Thankfully, the workshop, where the majority of woodblocks were kept was not damaged. With this bitter experience as a lesson, Tatsugoro took care to send all of the Isetatsu blocks out of Tokyo during the war and thus saved them for the joy of future generations.

It is also due to Tatsugoro's enthusiastic dedication that *chiyogami* has enjoyed a popular revival. Through exhibits, publications, a *chiyogami*-of-the-month club, and his school he has ensured that *chiyogami* will be loved as long as there are girls.



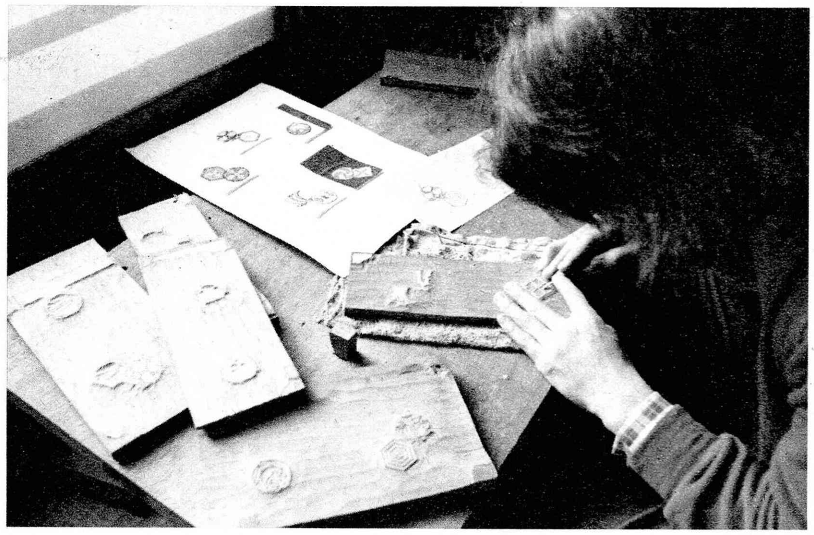
The collage shown on the opposite page comprises chiyogami sheets featuring stylized waves, pine-bamboo-plum motif and other auspicious themes.

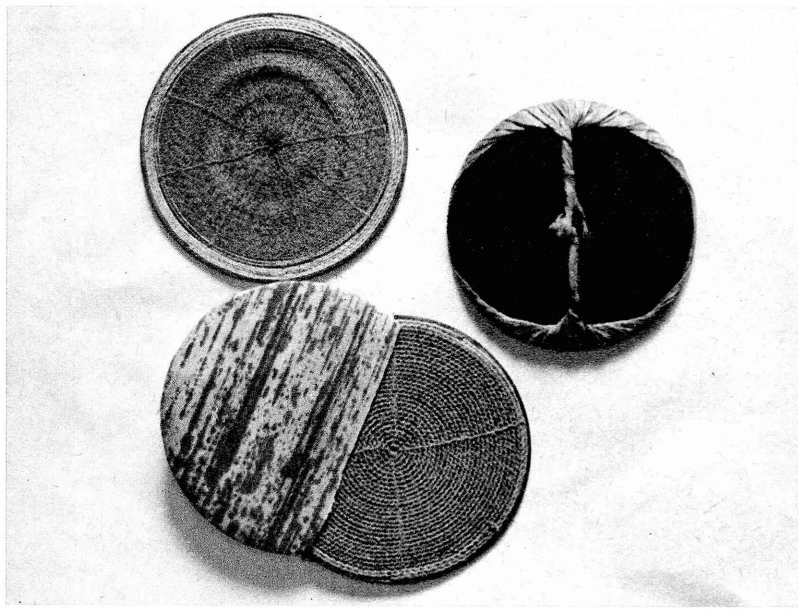


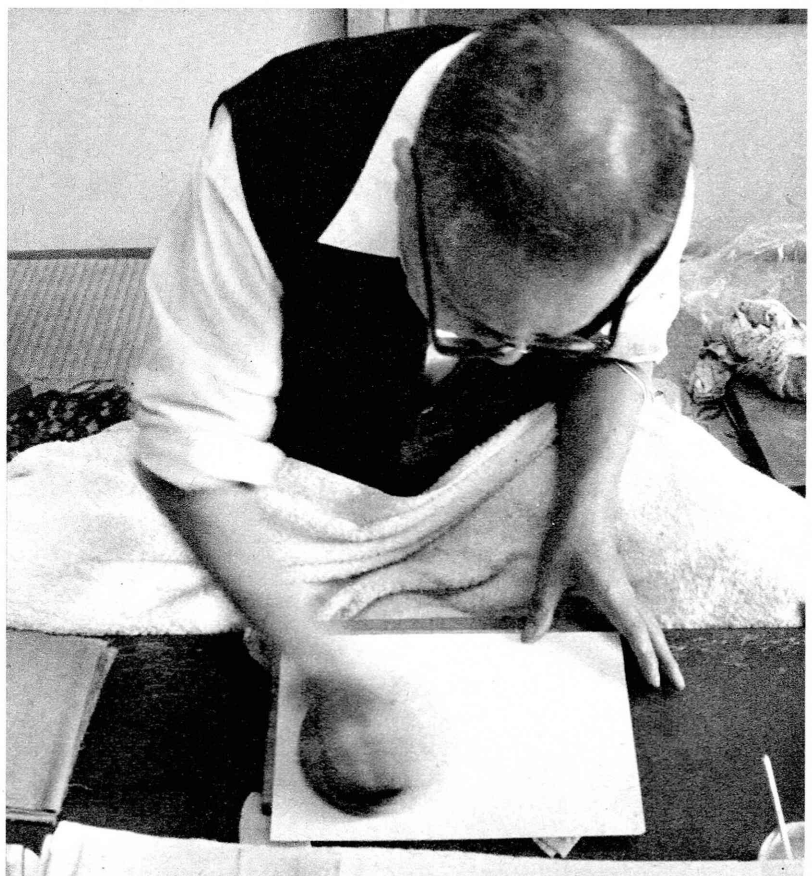




Top to bottom:
Tatsugoro Hirose, the doyen of the chiyogami world; the interior of his shop, the famous Isetatsu; happy girls find difficulty limiting their choice at an Isetatsu exhibit held at a Tokyo department store.







Top to bottom:
Carving the woodblocks; the baren Tsurukichi Arai uses to rub the design onto the paper; the printer at work

PLAYGROUND



Panoramic view of Nihon Land with snow-capped Mt. Fuji in the background

THERE are two vast pleasure resorts on the mid-slope of Mt. Fuji which can be reached by a two-hour drive from Tokyo. One is named Nihon Land and the other Fujikyu Highland. They are situated, respectively, on the southern and northern slopes of the 3,776-meter-high (12,390 feet) dormant volcano.

Managed by Fuji Kyuko Co., a major railway and bus enterprise, both have spacious parking lots. Nihon Land, sprawling over a plateau 1,300 meters (4,300 feet) above the sea level, consists of a golf course, a lake, field athletic courses, an amusement park and a cycling course. In winter, a part of the golf course is turned into a skiing ground and the lake becomes a natural skating rink.

As the highland is on the warm Pacific coast of Japan's main island, natural snowfall is slight despite its considerable height. In wintertime, the skiing ground is supplied with snow made with a battery of 28 snow guns. Snow is made by the simple process of jetting forth chilled water into the cold air. The spray instantly freezes into snow provided the temperature is lower than 2 degrees below zero.

The amusement park has a variety of facilities designed to please the small fry — a diving coaster, parasol tower, "rock-'n-roll," amphibian vehicles, steam engine trains, racing gocarts and a magic hall. In wintertime, the greatest attraction is a fleet of plastic snow-sleighs that glide down the slopes. On weekends, the skating rink on the lake is open all night for the benefit of the intrepid young.

Nearly half of Nihon Land's 700,000 annual clientele flock to the pleasure resort during the winter months, when the pleasure is enhanced by the breath-taking view of snow-capped Mt. Fuji seen at short range.

BY MT. FUJI

Photos by Japan Illustrated



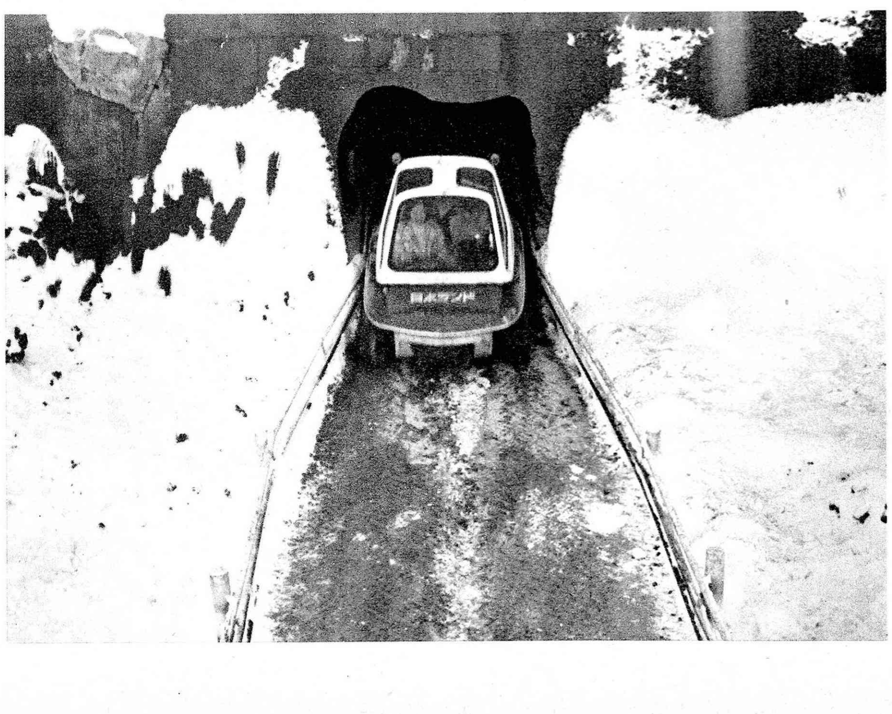




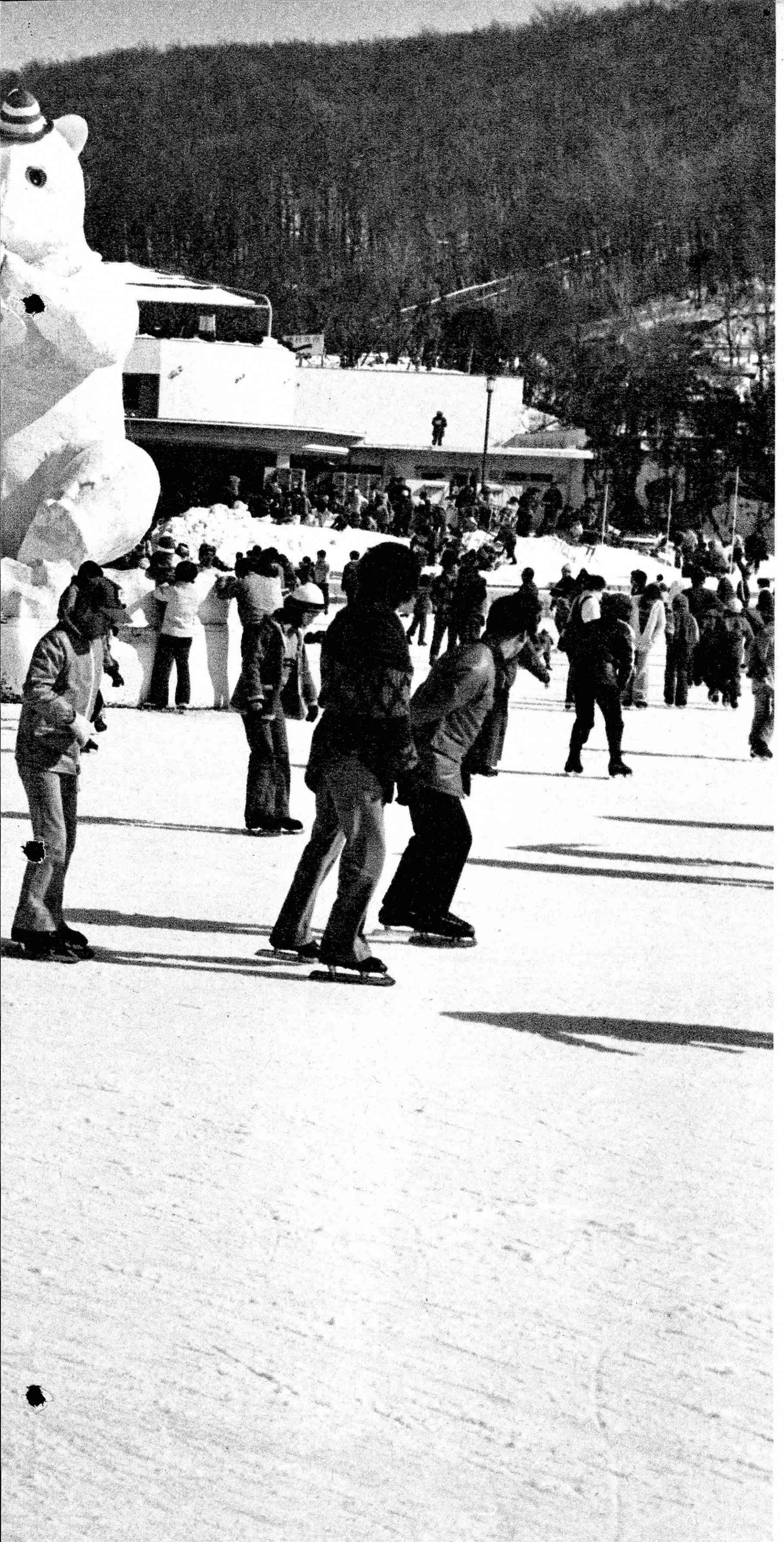
Top: Snow guns prepare the skiing ground at night. Above: Young skaters brave the late night cold on the natural skating rink.



Clockwise: A toddler shows off his agility on the sun-drenched rink.; Nihon Land offers very good skiing, enhanced by the majestic background.; Plastic snow-sleighs give a lot of fun to the very young.; A kindergartener enjoys the thrill of shooting down the sleigh slide.; Heart of an amusement park in Nihon Land; An amphibian vehicle emerging from a tunnel heads for the watery course.



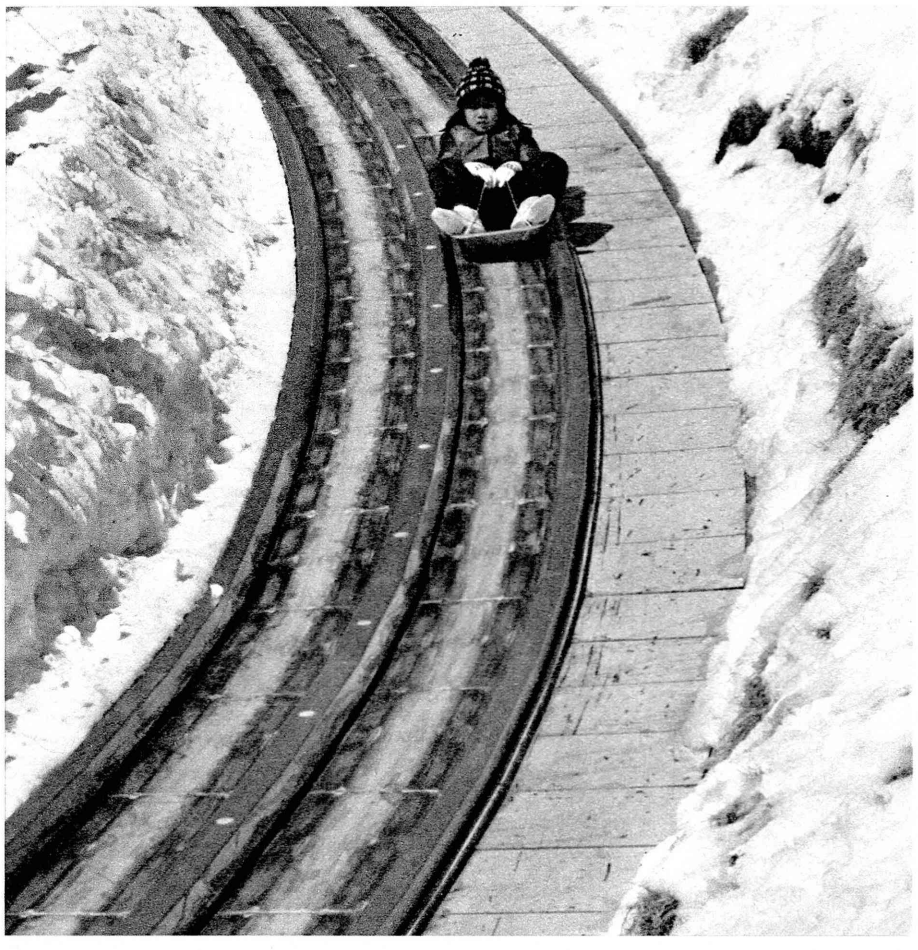









あそび広



Current Topics

Buddhist Exhibition Under Way in Paris



An exhibition of rare Japanese Buddhist works of art is under way in Paris for a seven-week run from April 6 to May 22.

The event, being held at the Petit Palais Museum, is sponsored by the Japan Foundation and the Cultural Agency of the Japanese Government.

A highlight of the exhibition is the 1,200-year-old lacquer statue of Chinese Buddhist sage Ganjin, the oldest plastic image of this type extant in Japan. Made with layers of linen and lacquer, the life-size statue represents a very realistic seated image of the high priest, who came to Japan in the late 8th century on an evangelical mission and founded the Toshodaiji Temple in Nara.

On display together with the statue are other treasures of the old monastery including 28 screen paintings by Kaii Higashiyama, a foremost contemporary artist. The Paris exhibition has been inspired by Andre Malraux, the late French Minister of Culture who visited Japan in 1974 when the sacrosanct Da Vinci portrait of Mona Lisa (La Gioconda) was shown at the Tokyo National Museum.

When he visited the Toshodaiji Temple on that occasion, Malraux was deeply impressed by the Ganjin statue and expressed the hope that it would be shown in France some day.

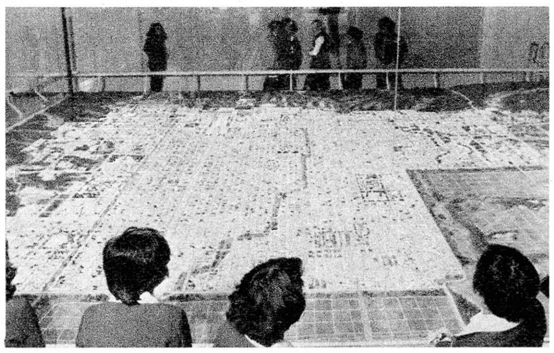
Relief Map of Old Nara

Visitors to the new City Hall of Nara will find an interesting object in its gallery. It is a wooden relief map showing Nara as the city must have looked 12 centuries ago when it was Japan's capital.

The rectangular model, measuring 8.4 by 6.3 meters, shows the ancient city reduced to a scale of one thousandth, with its Imperial palace, boulevards and streets crisscrossing the city center, major Buddhist temples and house as well as streams and woods in the suburbs.

The old capital, built around 710 A.D., was modeled after Tang Era China's capital Changan (present-day Sian in Shensi Province). With an estimated population of 200,000, it prospered for seven decades until the Imperial Court was moved to Kyoto in 784.

The relief map, which cost ¥30 million, was designed by leading historians and architects. The project was inspired by Nara's dynamic mayor Chuzaburo Kagita.



Portable, Light Wheelchair Developed

A portable wheelchair weighing about half that of a conventional model (Photo) has been developed by the Industrial Science and Technology Agency of the International Trade and Industry Ministry.

Agency researchers plan to offer some of the prototypes shortly for test rides to examine the practicability of the new product.

The three-year project to develop a light and portable wheelchair was started by a group of agency researchers in 1973 on a budget of ¥13 million.

A conventional steel-made wheelchair weighs about 20 to 22 kilograms. The Agency researchers first decided to reduce the weight of their product to about 10 kilograms. They picked carbon fiber, currently used to make golf club shafts and fishing rods, as a material for their wheelchair.

After manufacturing three wheelchairs on an experimental basis, they developed a plastic pipe reinforced with carbon fiber and produced a model.

The model underwent a series of test runs on various road conditions and the result was found to be quite satisfactory.

The researchers completed the prototype last March and the first product for practical use last October.

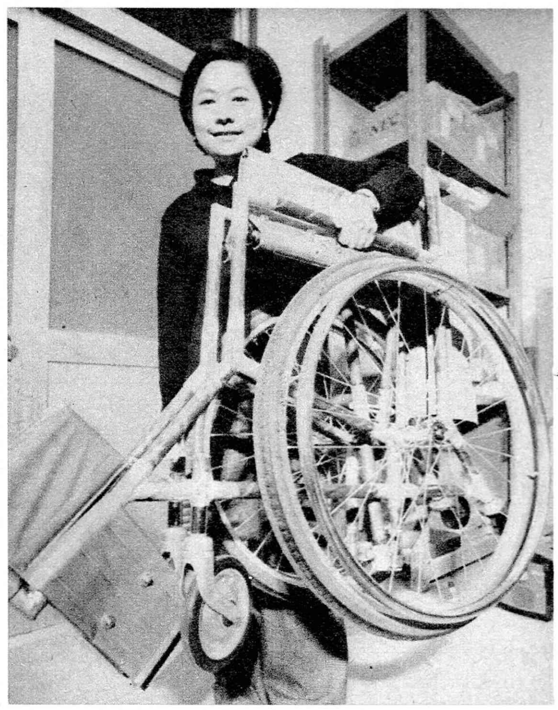
The newly developed wheelchair is claimed to have high durability and can be used at home, at work sites and in sports activity, too.

They have yet to find ways to reduce the production cost. It costs more than ¥100,000 to produce the new wheelchair compared with about ¥70,000 for a conventional steel-made model.

It is certain, however, that the development of the lighter and portable wheelchair will greately benefit handicapped persons in need of wheelchairs for their daily activity.

Zenichi Fujimori, director at the driving school for physically handicapped persons in Tokyo, says that the number of handicapped motorists is increasing because of their need to expand their sphere of activities.

"But the conventional wheelchair is so heavy and cumbersome that such motorists feel it difficult to bring their wheelchairs into their cars. The development of a lighter wheelchair is surely good news for them," he said.



U.S. Importer Buys Pachinko Machines

"Pachinko," the popular Japanese pin ball game, has found its way into the United States, according to a trader in Yokohama. Nagato Shokai Co. in Hodogaya Ward, has exported about 300,000 pin ball machines in the past four years.

All the exported machines were old ones that had fallen into disuse at pachinko parlors. They were given a fresh coat of paint and the needles were straightened before being exported.

The buyer, Roy Giliotti, a retired Air Force

colonel, became a pachinko enthusiast while in Japan. He lives in Sacramento, Calif. Giliotti even developed the skill of a "needle man," a person who adjusts the numerous pins on the face of the machine.

That pin adjustment and delicate "thumb work" determine the chances of carrying the steel balls successfully into winning holes. Usually 10 steel balls bounce into a steel receptacle with a rattle when a ball enters a winning hole.

The U.S. importer is said to be billing the game as a "stress reliever." Unlike in Japan, the machines are sold to offices and private persons for sheer diversion, according to Giliotti. Giliotti has opened 12 retail and wholesale outlets in cities including New York, Seattle and Long Beach to sell the machines. Through Giliotti, the machines are also sold at Sears, Roebuck in Chicago.

The Japanese trader first sent a catalogue of pachinko machines to the Post Exchange in the U.S. in the autumn of 1972. A response came from Giliotti, a PX concessioner, who asked for three sample units. Purchase orders followed one after another and a total of 30,000 units were exported by the end of that year.

Photo: Pachinko machines are loaded into a container in Yokohama for shipment to the United States.



World's Largest Tire

Yokohama Rubber Co. has started making what it claims to be the world's largest tires for use on 200-ton dump trucks at the south Yakutia coal field in Eastern Siberia.

The tire measures 1.13 meters wide and 3.6 meters in diameter. It weighs 3.5 tons — equivalent to about 350 passenger car tires.

Yokohama Rubber and two other companies received a ¥5 billion order from the Soviet Union last summer for 2,000 large tires, to be delivered over a five-year period beginning this autumn. The giant tire has the trade name of Trans Global.



Oceans Could Be Used To Generate Power

An 18-month-old experiment by Saga University researchers to generate power by utilizing the variation in temperatures of ocean water has proved successful. The prototype power generator was shown to the press recently at the university.

During the experiment, the prototype, measuring 10 meters in length and four meters in height, produced electricity of up to 211 watts — enough to light five light bulbs.

The demonstration was conducted by the group of 20 researchers headed by Prof. Hisao Kusuda of the university's Thermal Engineering Department.

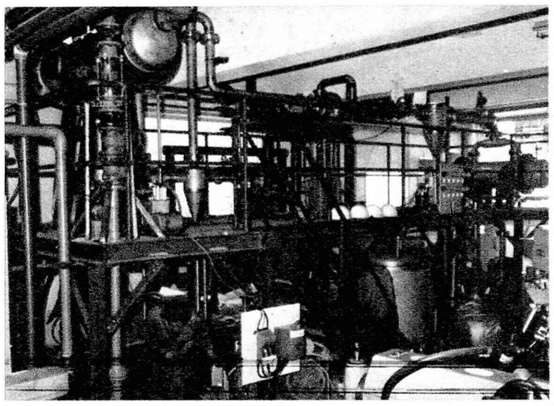
Power generation of this type does not require fuel and only uses ocean water to meet the mounting requirement for a pollution-free and energy-saving method of power generation.

The mechanism of the university's prototype is to vaporize freon, or hydrofloride carbon, known for its low boiling point of 25 to 30 C. with high-temperature water.

The vaporized chemical substance is introduced as a medium to rotate a turbine for power generation. The vaporized freon is later liquefied with low-temperature water, and the heat medium is circulated inside a closed circuit.

The variation in the water temperature for cooling or heating freon should be 20 C., and such difference of temperature is obtained by utilizing the water at the surface and bottom of the ocean.

The success of the experiment is largely attributable to the development of a special heat exchanger with high efficiency, according to the researchers.



Prof. Kusuda said that the researchers' group plans to start a new round of experiments with a heat exchanger of higher efficiency attached to the power generator.

He claimed that the cost of power generation with the new mechanism would be much lower than the conventional thermal power generators and nuclear reactors.

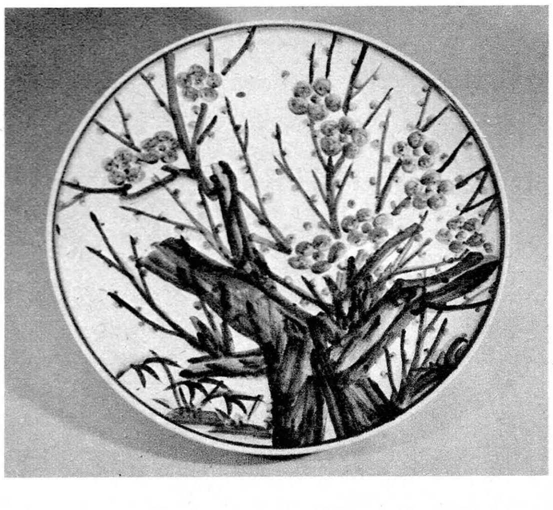
The researchers hope to further renovate the technology so that the power plant utilizing the new system would be put into practical uses in the early 1980s.

Jumbo Platter

A Japanese potter has come up with the largest plate in the world. It measures 126 cm (4 feet 2 inches) in diameter and weighs 100 kilograms (220 lbs). The potter used 200 kilograms of clay to make this ceramic anomaly.

The giant platter was made by Yuzo Kondo, a 74-year-old former art academy president. It features plum blossoms, a favorite motif for Japanese paintings.

The world's largest plate known so far was an old piece made by a Chinese potter. Measuring 70 cm in diameter, it is in the custody of the British Museum.



READERS' FORUM

Dear sir,

When visiting my mother, Mrs. Buckland, at Mornington, Victoria, she showed me the latest "Japan Illustrated" she had just received from Tokyo. It certainly is an excellent magazine, and your spring 1976 issue appears even more special to me. Maybe after so many years of living in Tokyo my husband and I appreciate even more, your splendid magazine, and now that we are living in Australia again, we very much want to receive your magazine regularly.

DORIS KENTWELL
Victoria, Australia

Dear Editor:

In recent issues of the Japan Illustrated, I liked the article on sake (Vol. 15, No. 1) and the feature on Takayama (Vol. 14, No. 4).

It was a pleasure to read about sake and all aspects of its manufacture and vinification, as I am a great lover of sake like Mr. David Jones.

In Takayama where I live there are many cultural assets we are proud of. My neighbors eagerly joined me in reading and discussing the articles, especially on subjects intimate to us.

I hope you will continue to write about topics and subjects which are popular among Japanese but not familiar to people living overseas.

YASUO YAMADA
Takayama
Gifu Pref., Japan

To the Editor:

Japan Illustrated is a source of much delight for me and my family. We especially appreciate stories about the daily life of the Japanese people. Isn't it wonderful that a nation as modern as the Japanese keep so much of their cultural heritage in their daily life! Hope you will publish more stories like the one on the paper lanterns of Gifu.

JOAN ROCKWELL
L.A., Calif.

Dear Sirs:

Our students are avid readers of your magazine. It is very helpful in their World Cultures classes.

The magazine, however, would be even more helpful if it were indexed. Do you have an index or is one available anywhere?

Our collection starts with the issue of Fall, 1966.

Thanks for your help.

LISA TYRE
Librarian,
Radnor High School
Radnor, Pa.

Readers are invited to send in their comments, queries and suggestions. We'll answer your questions to the best of our ability.

JAPAN ILLUSTRATED

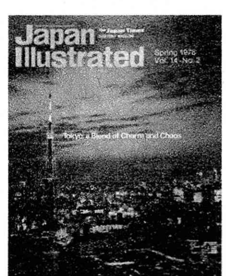
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Yuki Matsuri: the Big Winter Show

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Face-Lifting for the Great Buddha Hall
Booming Marine Sports
Grottoes around Mt. Fuji
A Highland Weekend
Sanae Kifuji: Queen of Dolls
Asian Musicians Meet in Tokyo
UNU—a University with a Difference
'Field Athletics' Catching On in Japan

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Tricycle Race Becoming a New Fad
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Paper Doll Wrestling
Japanese Movies Today—a Sad Story
Summer Haven for City Kids
Pyrotechnic Gala at Habikino
A New Role for Lowly Tofu

Winter 1977 (Vol. 15, No. 1)
All about Sake, Japan's National Drink
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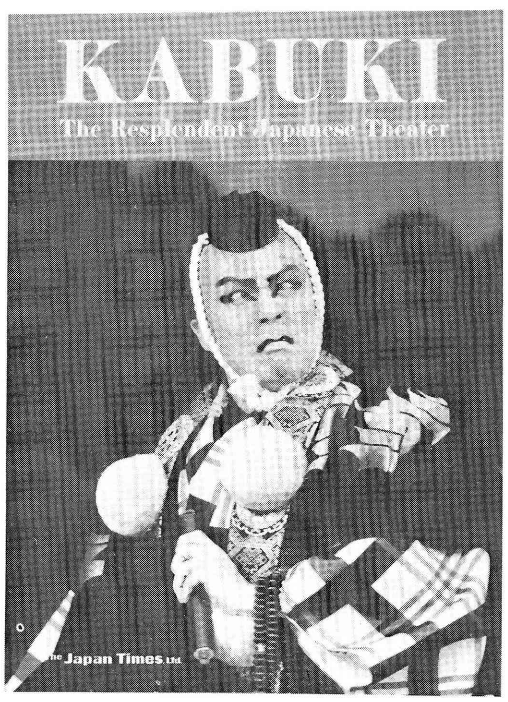
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In this Japan Times Photo Book, you can enjoy renowned scenes of Kabuki — dances, love scenes, fighting scenes, etc. — through the brilliant works of Chiaki Yoshida, a topnotch photographer of Kabuki.



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QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Is Tokyo Station Doomed?

¥380

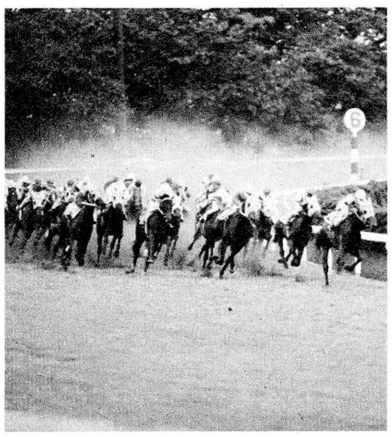
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Japan Illustrated

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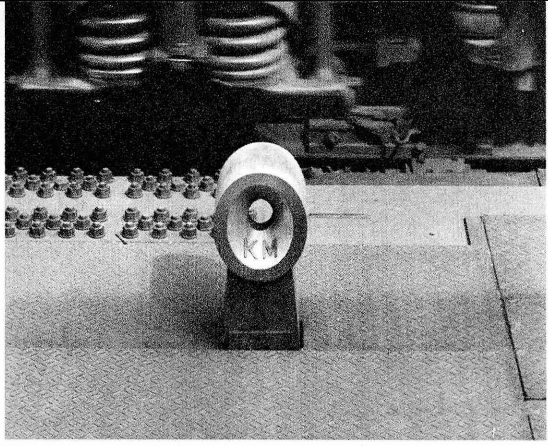


Cover photo: Racers thunder past the fourth turn in the 44th Japanese Derby race held at Tokyo Racecourse on May 29 with a capacity crowd of turf fans packing the stand. See pp. 16-21. (Photo by Kyodo News Service)

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Editorial Staff: Masayuki Ishida, Atsushi Kayada, Toru Mizuno, Junichi Saito, Shinobu Sunaga
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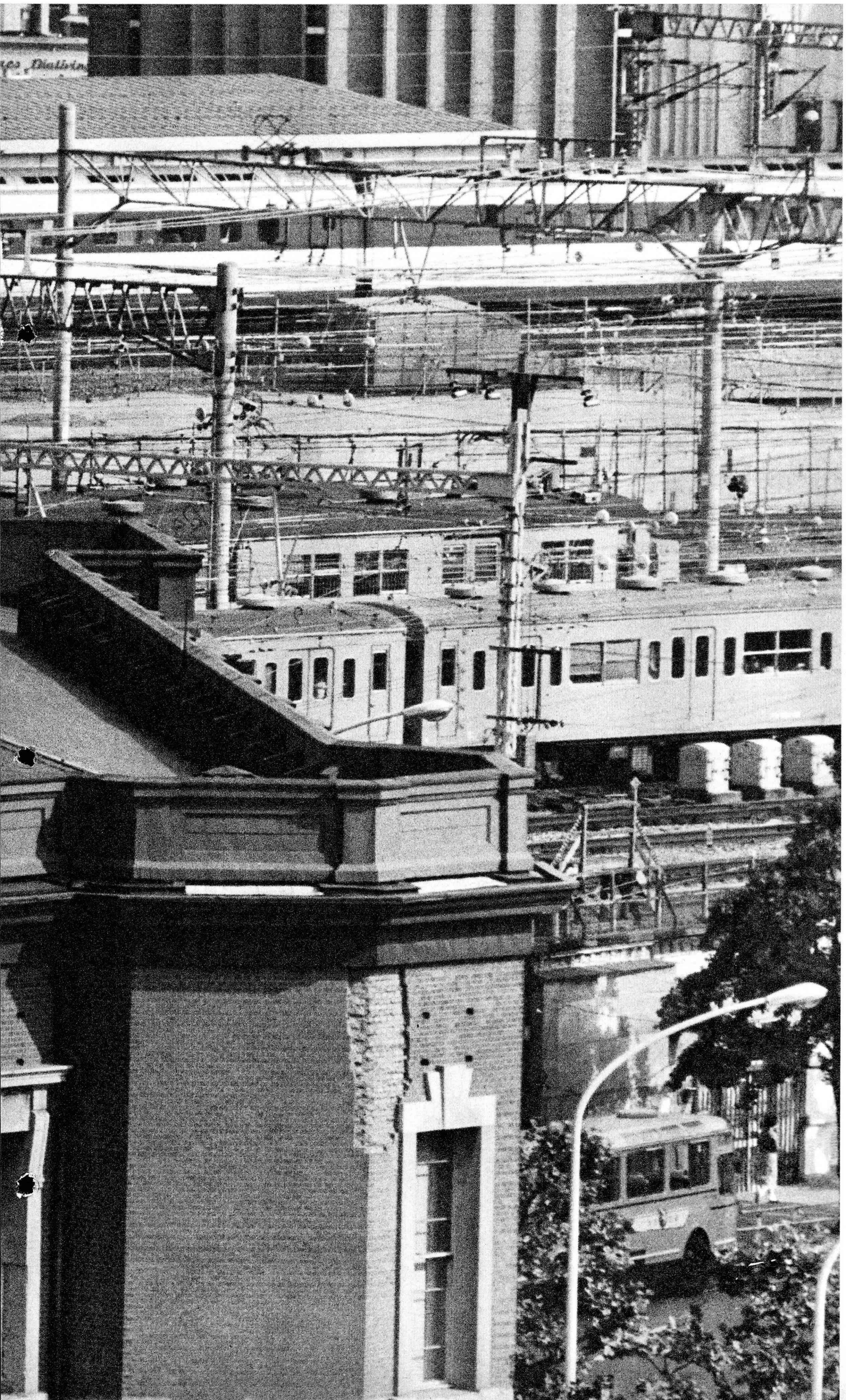


Is Tokyo

Left: This small steel structure sitting in the yard of Tokyo Station marks the starting mileage point of all the tracks of the Japanese National Railways.



Station Doomed?



SHOW me the real Japan, people often ask; but nobody can. There are too many "real" Japans, ranging from a thatch-roofed farm house to computerized oil tankers. Commuter trains jammed to three times capacity are as Japanese as areas that unfold some of the world's most scenic views, whether an ancient shrine dwarfed by majestic trees or a rugged sea coast where even the stones are felt to harbor spirits.

But if you want to hear the *sound* of Japan, come early in the morning to Marunouchi, the heart of Tokyo. Stand on the corner by the Central Post Office and listen. The sound you will hear is that of thousands of feet rushing to offices, a muffled roar that starts and stops at traffic signal commands. Notice that many people, to claim a route shorter by ten or twelve steps, will cut through the post office, a few seconds saved in an over-busy day.

This sound of hurrying feet is representative of the industriousness of the Japanese, the one factor, if indeed one can be isolated, that has contributed most to Japan's success in the modern world. In feudal days, similar dedication showed in the fine workmanship of the sword maker or the weaver of fabrics.

If you could count the number of commuters who use Tokyo Station each day, the figure would reach almost one million. For some, it is merely a transfer point to another line that takes them to other parts of the city, but many will go out the west exit for their jobs in Marunouchi, Japan's business headquarters, or the eastern Yaesu exit,

Jean Pearce, author of this article, is a long-time resident of Japan. Her widely-read Japan Times column, Getting Things Done, answers questions of all kinds concerning living in Tokyo, a city that baffles as well as delights. She writes for a number of Japanese and foreign publications and is the author of three books. *How to Get Things Done in Japan,* Vols. 1 and 2, are compilations of her Japan Times columns. The third, *Foot-loose in Tokyo,* is a unique travel guide that explores both past and present, an introduction to history, shopping, legends and entertainment. Perhaps this book explains her interest in preserving the old Tokyo Station Building. With book in hand, curious travelers explore the areas adjacent to the 29 stations of the city-encircling Yamanote Line. Starting place: Tokyo Station.

Left: The sleek bullet train in the background presents a striking contrast to the old but elegant brick-and-granite building of Tokyo Station.

Tokyo Station has two faces. One is the 83-year-old west building facing the Imperial Palace across the moat (below).



The other is the 12-story Yaesuguchi building on the east side of the sprawling station compound. This structure is mostly occupied by a department store.



doorway to the shopping extravaganza of the Ginza.

In earlier days, when Tokyo was Edo and the *shogun* claimed to have the most extensive palace grounds in the world, the street scene was different but no less busy. Then processions of merchants brought fine goods for the pleasure of the *shogun* (or his ladies), farmers piled their produce on carts and unfurled banners proclaiming just whose goods were going to be found on palace tables that night, and samurai demanded respect by their proud demeanor as well as by their two swords honed to a cutting edge that could quickly end a life in a flashing arc of steel. But there is little need to write of those days. Television has once again brought them to life, and much of the world is familiar with the streets of ancient Edo.

Instead, let us pause awhile at the low-slung red brick Tokyo Station Building that faces toward the palace. It is an appropriate time to do so. There are rumors that this old landmark is soon to feel the shattering impact of the wrecker's demolition ball. Japan, always on the move, has little time or inclination to preserve its past architectural triumphs. A few, like the entranceway to Frank Lloyd Wright's Old Imperial Hotel, get carted off to Meiji Mura near Nagoya where the past still lives in the occasional Meiji era buildings selected for preservation.

People marveled at the splendid building that was opened to the public on Friday, December 18, 1914, a three-year project that cost nearly ¥3 million. (Recent construction of the station's new underground lines demanded seven years and ¥23 billion.) There were fireworks, a tremendous bank of fresh flowers, and free trips for the invited guests on the new electric railway to Yokohama.

A different traffic control system was in effect in those pre-rush hour days. Departing passengers used the right side of the building, arriving passengers the left. The central portion was reserved for the use of the Imperial Household.

Chronologies show that Emperor Meiji was the first ruler to ride on a train and give the date as the station's opening day. A recently discovered document, however, shows that he had a preview when his ship was forced into Yokohama Harbor by a storm and he returned to his capital on a train making a test run over the new tracks. Likely it was quite different from today's trains. It is said that when Emperor Hirohito travels, the engineer is so skillful that an egg placed on a table will not roll when the train begins to move or comes to a stop.

While today there is no separation of arriving and departing passengers, the Imperial Household still has exclusive use of the central entrance. Then the barriers to the circular drive are removed, the huge doors are opened, the red carpet is laid and the station master stands at attention. The marble-lined hallway leads past a life-size wall hanging of a golden lacquer deer and two majestic cloisonne vases to the Emperor's waiting room which has, among its treasures, one of the two paintings in color done by the famous artist Taikan Yokoyama, valued, it is said, at ¥120 million. The room, however, has not been used, not even once; the Emperor has never had cause to "wait." To the left is the Crown Prince's waiting room which is also used on special occasions by visiting heads of state and other high-level dignitaries.

These impressive rooms are closed to public view, but there is a trip to yesterday's elegance that anyone can make. The Tokyo Station Hotel was once one of the city's finest and in the early days, more people came to admire the luxurious accommodations than to take the trains for the tickets were priced well beyond the purse of the average working man. The hotel has continuously boasted of 100 per cent occupancy. It has a captive group of guests: those who arrive too late for the last train home.

The hotel has had some famous occupants. In 1956, Nobel Prize-winning author Yasunari Kawabata stayed there while writing his story, "Onna de Aru Koto." From the window of his room, 317, he could look down on the south rotunda. Tamiji Kitagawa, a famous modern artist, chooses this hotel when he is in Tokyo.

Today's guests are capturing the past if not its luxury. Tokyo's new hotels have relegated this one

A shiny bullet train rolls into Tokyo Station after a 1,176 kilometer journey from Hakata.





to a rather shabby reminder of other times, but it maintains a nostalgic appeal seldom found in this modernized city. The dining room continues its reputation for gracious service and fine European cuisine established long ago. It is certainly one of the most interesting places to take guests. No other hotel dining room can match the scenery of trains passing by — on some lines, every two minutes during rush hours. As many as 2,600 trains a day use the station.

The hotel has always been a popular place for wedding parties, and even today the wedding hall and party rooms are fully booked during the spring and fall "seasons." It's a location difficult to match if the newly married couple is leaving for their honeymoon on the high-speed Shinkansen.

The hotel boasts that until May 25, 1945 it never closed its doors. That was the night of the *Daikushu,* the fire-bombing of Tokyo. There were 40 guests in the hotel. They sought shelter in the basement of the Japanese National Railways headquarters building across the street. It was well they did. A bomb hit the north dome and the ensuing fire spread throughout the building. The nearby Marunouchi Hotel survived the bombing, and it is reported that the hotel's kitchen staff made breakfast for the displaced guests — *onigiri,* rice balls. The station building lost its third floor in that disaster, and the two rounded domes that were the distinctive features of the right and left hand sections. Today's towers are poor substitutes for the originals, but in the postwar reconstruction days there were shortages of both money and materials; the building could not be restored to its earlier splendor.

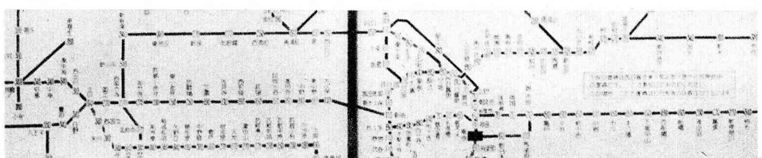
IF the Marunouchi side of the station mirrors the past, the Yaesu side shows a modern face. Or perhaps we should say foot, for its pride is the vast underground "shoppers' paradise," a complex of restaurants, stores and services that would seem to eliminate the need of ever surfacing. And indeed, that was the concern of merchants who hadn't joined in the plan. When they discovered the popularity of the underground city, they launched a protest movement, marching through the streets — above ground, that is — with placards reading, "People are not moles; they should not live underground!" It had little effect on the commuters who continued to use the underground passages on their way to the station, shopping for the day's necessities and pleasures as they walked along.

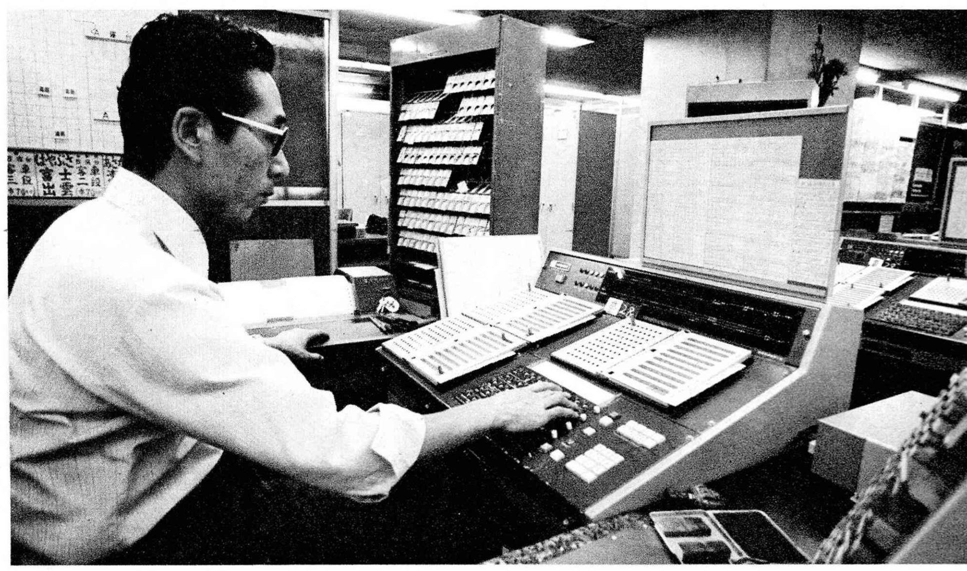
Under the station, the result of a remarkable engineering feat, are five floors of business offices, platforms, and ticket and information services. A great deal of space is given to disaster prevention facilities. The structure is considered to be earthquake and fire proof, and railcars to be used in the underground area are made of non-inflammable material. Should a fire break out, a vast network of automatic equipment goes into operation to activate sprinklers and smoke suction pumps. To assure power at all times, there are three separate power transmission systems in addition to emergency power generators for lighting and radio announcements to passengers. It is the second deepest station in Japan, being 26 meters below ground level.

No matter how modern the facilities of any station, there is one problem that remains unsolved: the forgetful passenger. Although announcements are made on all trains reminding people not to leave anything behind, there are around 600 items left in the station or on trains terminating there each day, and a daily amount of money averaging ¥484,000. Perhaps reflecting today's more affluent Japan, much of the money remains unclaimed. Umbrellas lead the list of forgotten articles but there are always such things as false teeth and funeral ashes that are left behind.

Well, there is a great deal more that I would like to tell you about Tokyo Station and the many interesting places nearby, but I must stop now and get ready to go to a party. I have been invited to a nostalgia dinner at the old Tokyo Station Hotel. Now that the rumors are going around concerning its possible demolition, people are arranging parties to recapture a bit of the past before it is gone forever. Don't wait too long to take your own tour of the Tokyo Station Building.







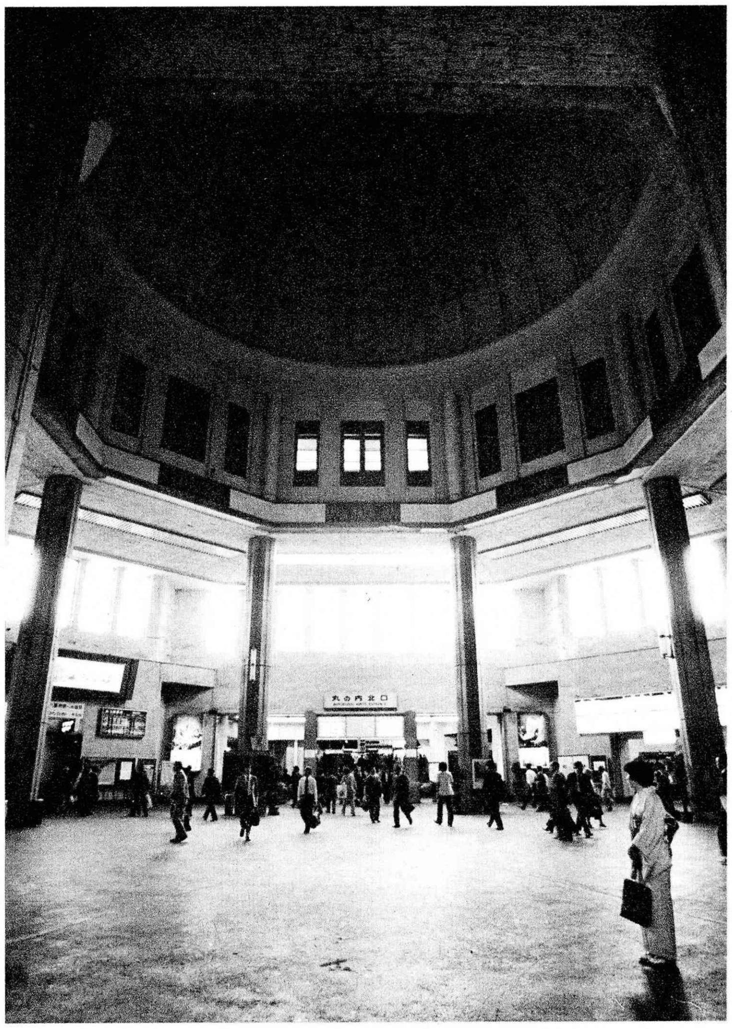


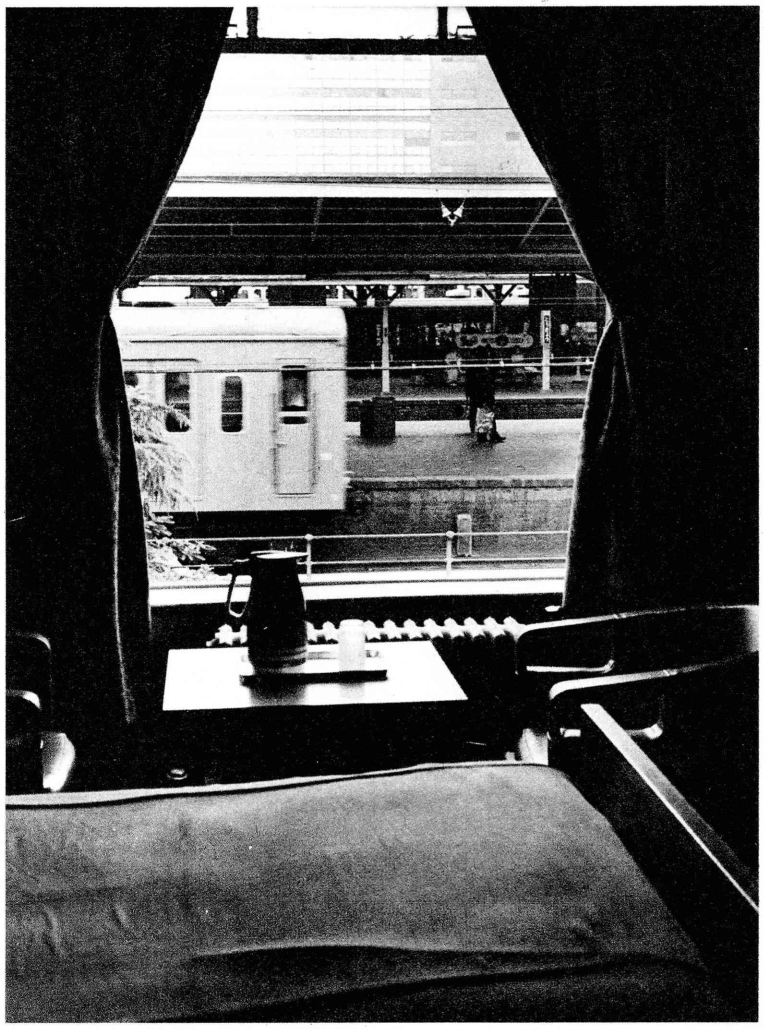
Above: Automatic ticket vending and money changing machines help lessen the work load of station employees. Above right: An attendant mans a computerized machine that dispenses the tickets for Shinkansen and special express trains. Right: The Shinkansen timetable showing details of the daily operations of bullet trains.

Left: This underground platform, constructed recently to take care of the increasing number of passengers, lies 26 meters below ground level.



Below left: The rotunda of the Marunouchi side building of Tokyo Station with its nostalgic dome is almost deserted during prerush hours. Below right: Room No. 215 of Tokyo Station Hotel which commands a view of busy trains traffic is coveted by railroad buffs.



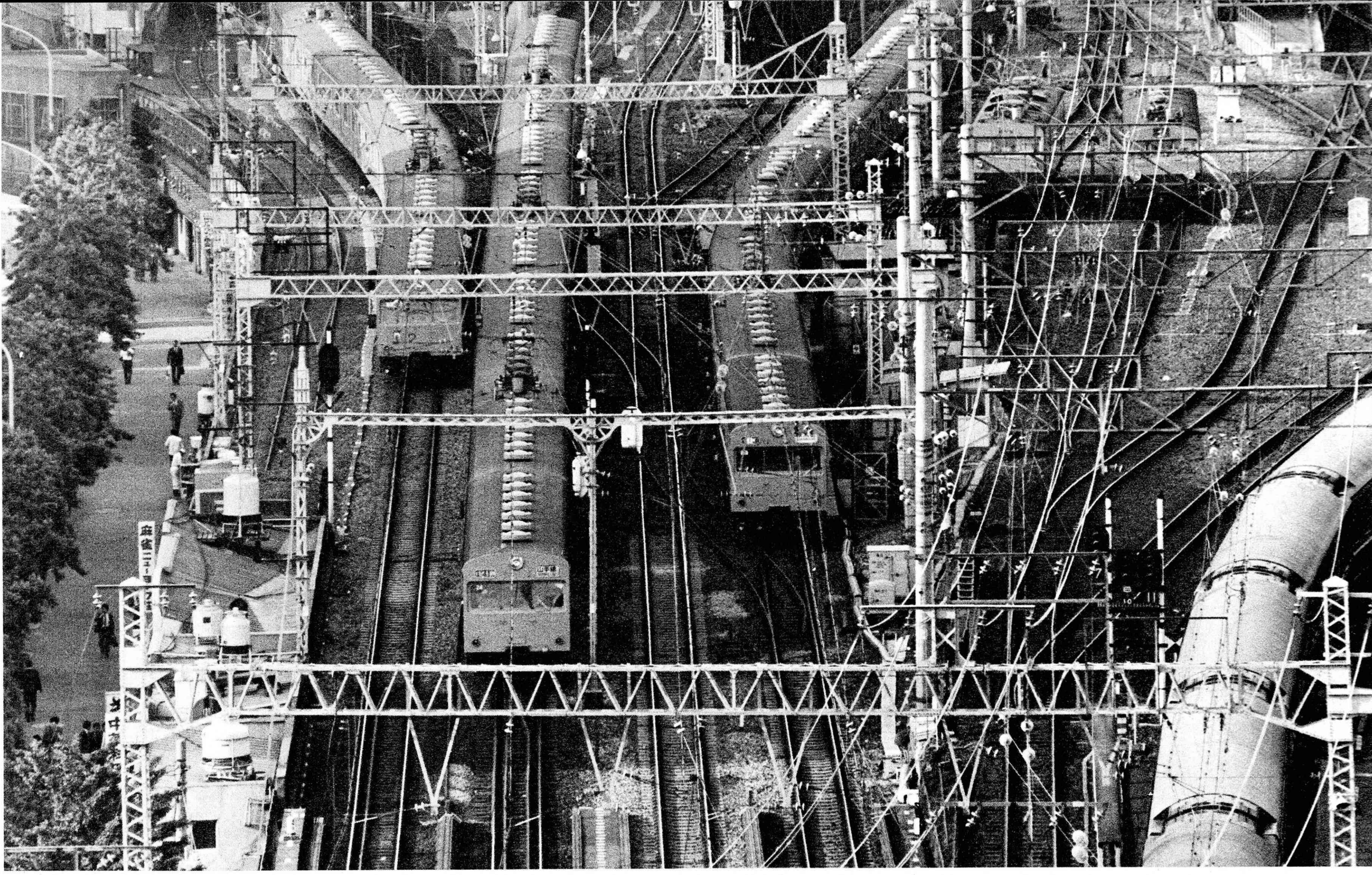


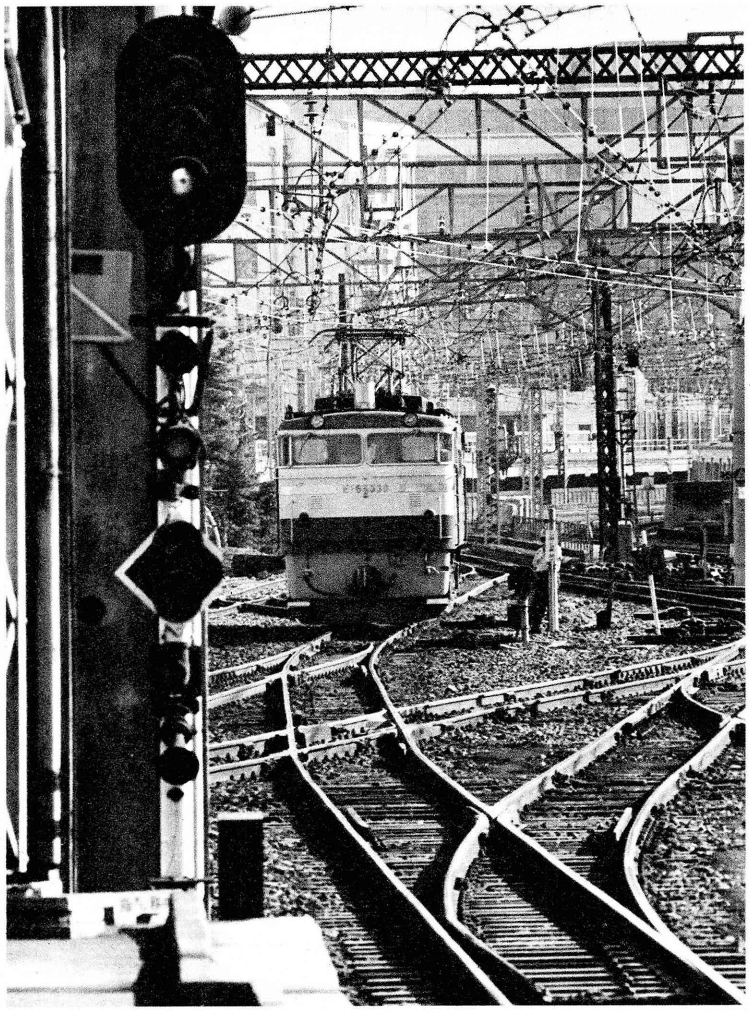


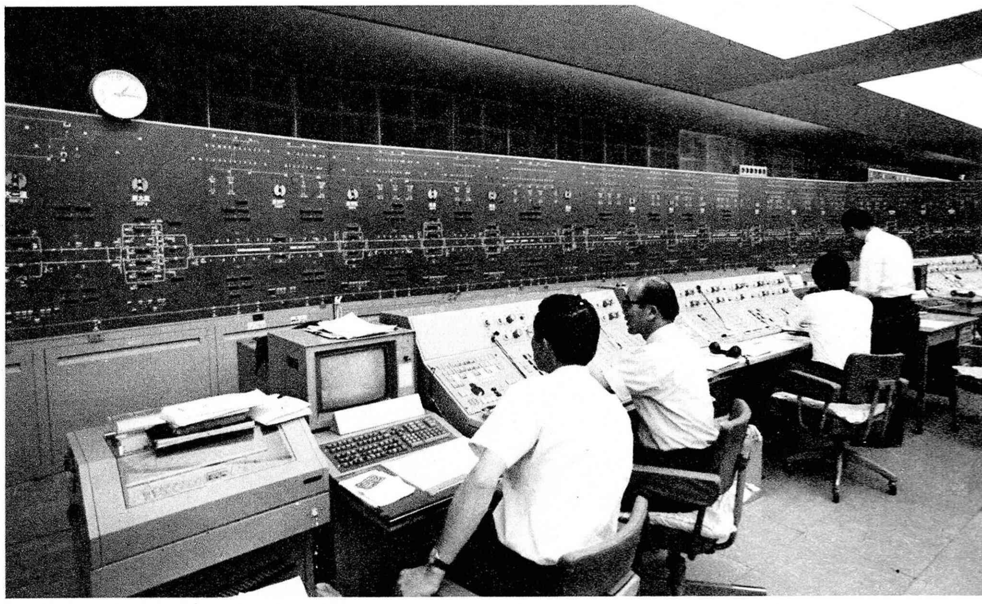


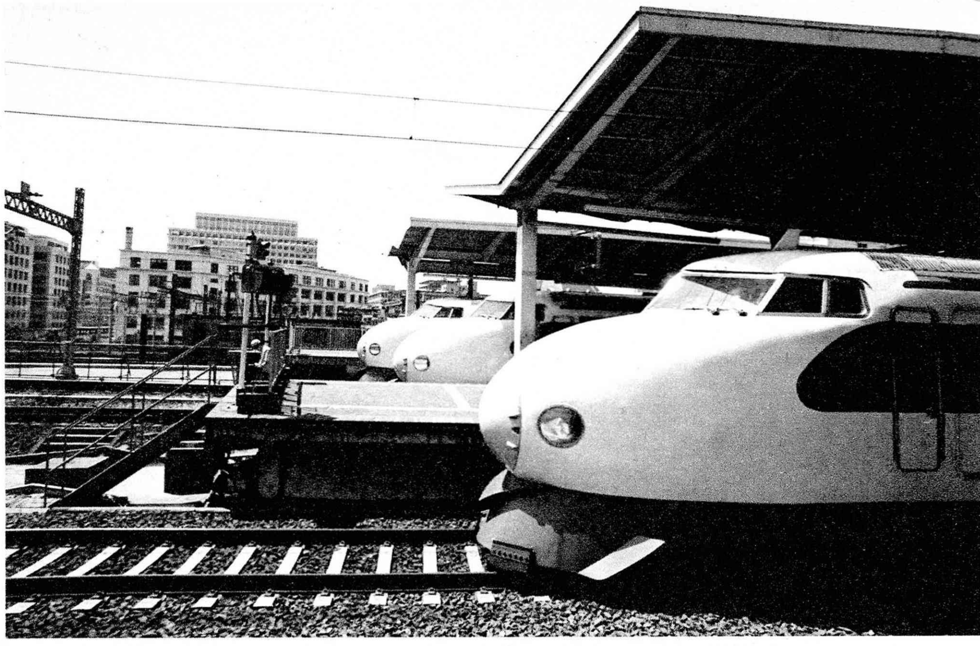


Above left: Commuters arriving at underground platforms are swiftly brought upstairs by long escalators. Left: A kiosk bulges with books, magazines, snacks and gift items. Above: An attendant sells box lunches at one of the many stalls on Tokyo Station platforms.

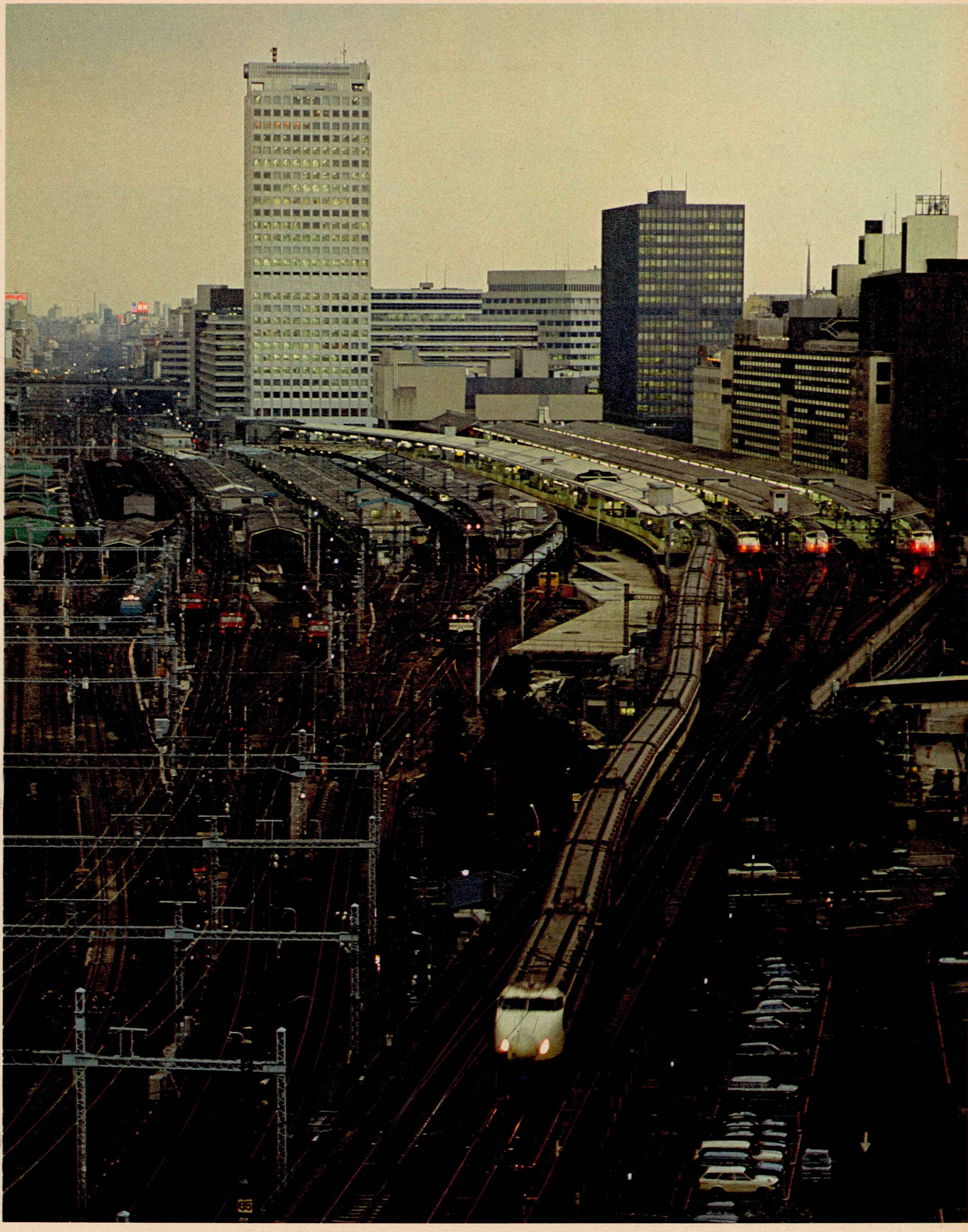




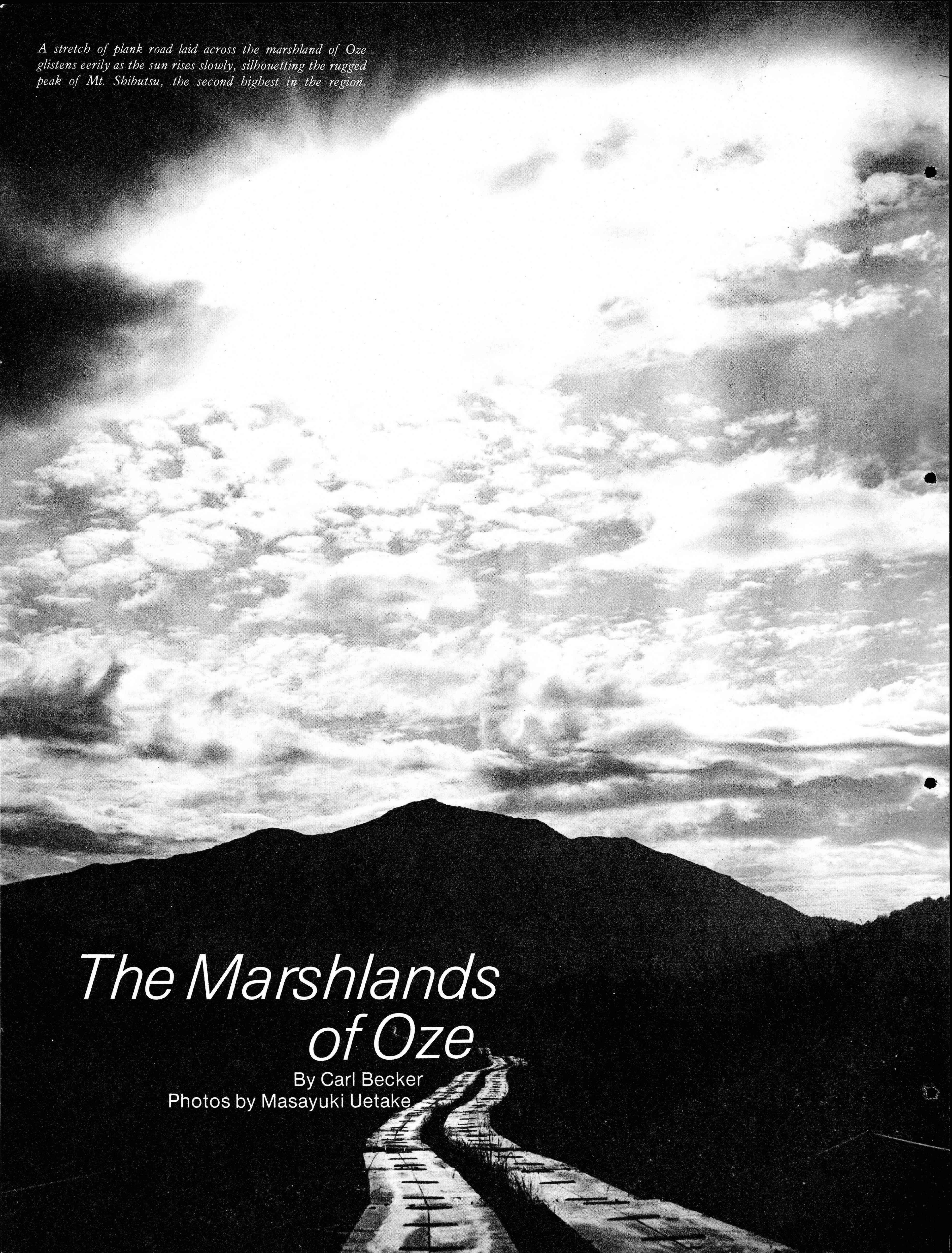




Top: Twenty-one tracks, four of them underground, converge on Tokyo Station, with 2,600 trains bringing in, and sending out, crowds of commuters and long-distance travellers day after day. Above: An electric locomotive moves into position to pull an express sleeper train. Above right: Part of the Shinkansen traffic center that controls the entire system of bullet train operations. Right: Shinkansen trains headed west await departure time.



Tokyo Station yard at dusk, as two long-distance trains depart simultaneously — one the "bullet" train for Hakata, the Kyushu terminal of the New Tokaido Line, and the other sleeper express "Mizuho" bound for Nagasaki



A stretch of plank road laid across the marshland of Oze glistens eerily as the sun rises slowly, silhouetting the rugged peak of Mt. Shibutsu, the second highest in the region.

The Marshlands of Oze

By Carl Becker
Photos by Masayuki Uetake

WHERE can you meet a blizzard in May, only four hours from Tokyo? Where can you trek a mountain marshland, accessible only by foot or helicopter, whose only communication is by wireless? The dream of young Japanese hikers, it is called Oze (pronounced Ozé). Thinking of Nikko Park, one may imagine the gaudy shrines, the honeymoon trains and the too-posh hotels of the Tochigi-ken area. But twenty-odd miles to the northwest, on the border of Gunma and Fukushima-ken, the swamps of Oze remain remarkably unspoiled.

The key factor in Oze's virginity is its geographical inaccessibility. Ringed by 7,000-foot volcanic mountains, Oze was in prehistoric times a large lake. Centuries of rain-washed sedimentation and decaying water-plants have gradually filled the basin with silt, so that it is now but a few inches deep in most places. Both the surrounding mountains and the shifty soil of the interior render it utterly unsuited to roadbuilding. Thus, it happily remains the domain of wild flowers, birds, and hardy hikers.

Oze is nationally famous for its floral beauty. First buds peep boldly through the snow late in May, and soon blossoms literally cover the face of the marsh. The rimland's mountain cherries blossom in June, while the swamp itself fills with *mizubasho* (a beautiful relative of skunk cabbage, whose blossom resembles the American jack-in-the-pulpit). These are followed by a myriad of lilies, irises, and mountain azaleas. Autumn comes early to the high altitudes, and the October foliage is reputedly incomparable. After that, one generally needs skis, for the winter lasts six months, and only a few old mountain-men staff the lodges.

Oze requires at least two days — better three or four — to see and experience. Numerous hostels in the hiking area operate cooperatively, charging the fixed rate of ¥3,300 for a dinner, breakfast, and night's lodging. Naturally, food and bedding, bath and toilet are Japanese style; communal facilities range from rustic to crude, par for the wilderness course. The weather is highly variable, so rain gear and hiking boots are a must, but food and drinks are available at conveniently-placed rest stations, so they need not burden your backpack.

In summer, the "Oze Express" leaves Ueno Station at ten and midnight. Changing to a waiting bus at Numata Station, one reaches the trailheads of Ooshimizu or Fujiminoshita at daybreak. Weekend trains are reputedly crowded.

Free maps are available from the local bus stations, and in any case, the trails are unmistakable. Major junctions display maps or signposts showing direction and distance to the next landmarks. In wooded areas, trailside trees are blazed in red or yellow, while the trails through the bog are limited to wooden plankways on which all must walk. Not only is the surrounding bog surprisingly cold and deep mud, but the delicate marsh plants killed by a single footstep take decades to replace.

Representative specimens of rare plants are carefully labeled, with the typical Japanese attention to fine detail. Other signs remind one to carry all litter out of the park. It is indeed a credit to the hikers that the trails within the park are impeccable — although the roads outside are liberally sprinkled with the typical trash.

One occasionally hears complaints about the grey skies or the hustle and bustle of Tokyo. To remedy the metropolis blues, no great outdoors could fill the prescription better than Oze. It combines unexpected proximity to Tokyo with the challenges of hiking and nature photography. It is said that girls make up more than two-thirds of the Oze hikers; perhaps they are attracted by the incomparable views of vast fields of flowers and birds. Veteran hikers may be more challenged by the steep gorges and snow-capped peaks of Mount Hiuchi or Mount Shibutsu. Whatever your vocation or avocation, the grandeur of brooding peaks and crashing waterfalls, the eerie mystery of glassy ponds and the misty marsh, will not fail to leave their deep impression upon you.

A Two-Day Oze Diary

Oze. I had heard the name from friends in a hiking club, but wasn't sure what to expect. From the map, it looked like a swampy high-altitude tundra, ringed by 7,000-foot mountains. The postcards reminded me of Scottish heath, or the Colorado Front Range, profuse with flowers, flowers, flowers. Always game for a good hike, I had stuffed my camera and bulky sweater in a light pack, and set off from Tokyo's Ueno Station on a night express bound for Niigata.

Shortly before Numata, the train began climbing a steep grade, and passing noisily through long tunnels. I stepped out on the small platform, and followed a hiker who claimed to be an old Oze hand across the windy square to the waiting bus. The bus zigzagged up a steep slope, rumbled through the sleeping town, and out through the countryside, where signs heralded apple picking, and the white blossoms swirled down through the black breeze.

The wind slapped me awake as I stepped off the bus into the freezing dawn at Ooshimizu. Hikers around me began elaborately to prepare rice and soup over kerosene stoves, but satisfied with coffee and biscuits, I crunched up the gravelly trail ahead of them. The sky over Numata was clear behind me, but the shadows of clouds blowing from the mountains raced repeatedly over my face. The sound of rushing water, sometimes babbling and gurgling, sometimes roaring, was to accompany me for the next two days. The trail narrowed, and began a switchback route up the side of the mountain. Little streams sometimes thought the trail belonged to them. Panting at the top of a steep rise, I greeted my first boardwalk, a plank road that runs through most of the park, to protect hikers from mud, and delicate mountain plants from hikers. As I crossed the ridge, a freezing gust caught my breath, and I gazed spellbound at an azure lake surrounded by snowy mountains.

Without the grace of skis, I slid down the icy slope to Ozenuma lodge, on the edge of Lake Oze. The friendly geezer at the rest house bragged that he lived there all year round, that they had burned the boat across lake Oze because it was noisy, that blizzards were rare at the end of May, and that his homemade pork stew was delicious. It was piping hot, and he was right. The view of the mountains from the lakeside trail was breathtaking, but the high waves didn't allow reflections. Signs on prominent trees and shrubs informed me of their names, and reminded me to carry my own litter out of the park. I marvelled gratefully at the utter absence of litter, despite the footprints attesting to a multitude of weekend hikers.

At the other end of the lake, I stopped at Numajiri, proposing to climb Mount Hiuchi. But snow was falling heavily, so I set my sights on Shimotashiro instead. As I crossed windswept flats and steep slopes, I painfully regretted that I couldn't enjoy gazing at the scenery while keeping my balance. Reaching the cluster of muddy huts at Shimotashiro, I thawed my freezing hands and stopped to reconnoitre. Warned against the poor food at Tooden, and attracted by the signs of hot springs, I headed north to Onsen Goya. To the left and right of the boardwalk blossommed hundreds of thousands of white *mizubasho* and yellow *ryukinka,* defying the snow. I was beginning to enjoy the characteristics of the boardwalk itself, too. New-looking boards took my step without complaint, but older rotting ones nearly crumbled. Some bounced gaily or see-sawed underfoot, while others sank slowly into the bog as I hastened to the other side. The steam of tepid springs rising through the cold wind assured me that I had indeed reached the Onsen. Inside, the hot drinks flowed freely, and the dozen hostellers that night were soon well-acquainted. The hot food, prepared by a pretty girl from Fukuoka, was outstanding, including tempura-fried *natto* and various mountain leaves, and refills of *miso* soup. After a deep hot bath, my tired body was soon oblivious of the world, between *futons.*

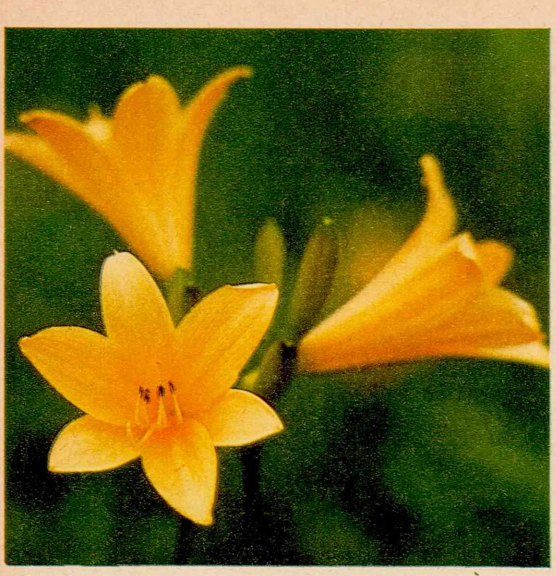
I woke at six to a world blanketed in white. After a hot breakfast and sincere thanks, I struck out again. Clinging to vines, roots, and chains (conveniently provided for the purpose), I skidded down the trail to Hiraname and Sanjo Falls. Hiraname is broad, shallow, a cascade dancing over a bouldery base; Sanjo, with its sheer drop of hundreds of feet into a deep gorge, puts even Kegon Falls to shame. Clambering back up the slippery slopes, I headed on over swaying suspension bridges to Tooden, where a blazing fireplace awaited me in the lodge.

Crossing the flower-speckled Ozegahara marsh to Ryugu Goya, I remarked a peculiar phenomenon. Tokyo businessmen and Kyoto housewives, who wear navy suits or dark dresses in the drab city, invariably don yellow jackets, red boots, green hats and orange pants when they go to the mountains. Perhaps this reassures them, as they are visible to each other at great distances, but it scares the birds before they can get close enough for a picture. I, however, notorious for olive or gold blazers over my superwhite Hawaiian slacks, wore only my drabbest jeans and grey fatigues on a mountain hike. My moccasin-soled boots all but trod the tails of the surprised birds who screeched up from underfoot.

Clouds rolled over the brooding mountains, swirling eerily over the marsh like a scene from Macbeth. Lone white birches or craggy cypresses stroked the wind, and I wondered why America can't produce such artistic trees.

Of course, it is not always winter in Oze; this year's was unusually severe. But it is always cool, and the weather highly changeable, so rain parka, sweater, and boots are in order. As numerous rest houses serve food and drinks, one need not carry food; film is also available, if you bring your camera.

Carl Becker, an American Japanologist, is studying Japanese religion at Kyoto University.



Nikkokisuge (Hemerocallis middendorffii)



Hosobanahinausuyukiso (Leontopodium fauriei)



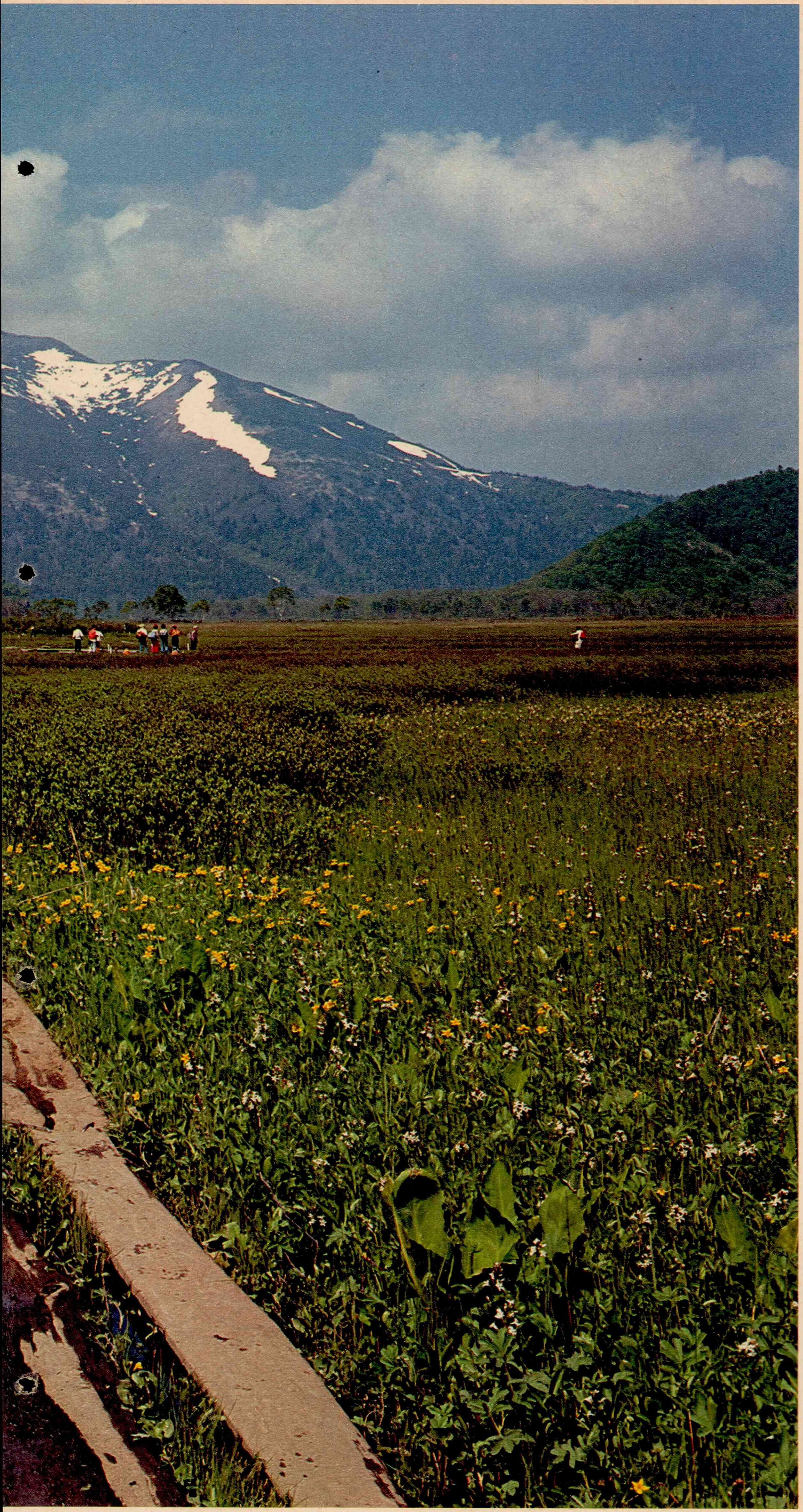
Yukiwariso (Primula modesta)



Mizubasho (Lysichiton camtschatcense)



Wooden plankways run through Oze's flower-dotted marshland, protecting hikers from mud



and delicate mountain plants from their footsteps.



Kakitsubata (Iris japonica)



Yamatorikabuto (Aconitum japonicum)



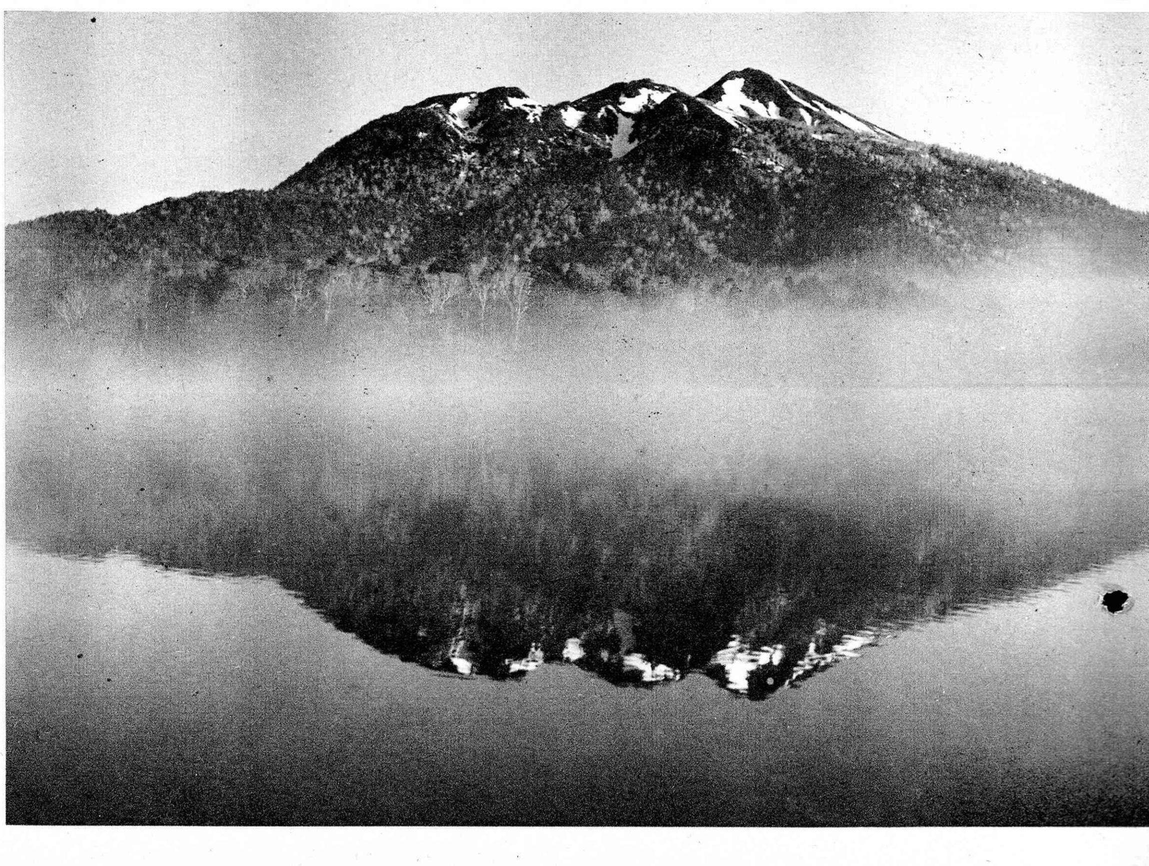
Ryukinka (Caltha palustris)



Zazenso (Symplocarpus renifolius)

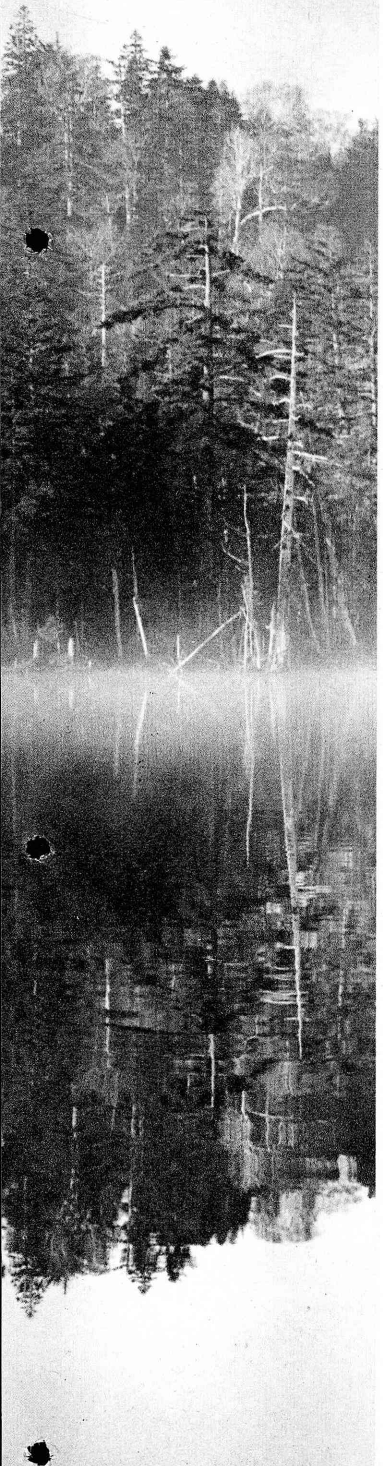






Above: A myriad of rare water plants are found in the lakes and marshes of Oze. Right: Mt. Hiuchi, soaring to a height of 2,346 meters, dominates Oze's scenery. It is the highest mountain in northern Honshu.

Left, below and bottom: Three enchanting aspects of Lake Oze, lying still, solemn, forbidding.







JAPAN'S GALLOPING THOROUGHBREDS

—A Report on Japanese Derby—



Twenty-eight thoroughbreds gallop away before a crowd of 150,000 excited fans who packed the Fuchu racetrack on May 29 for the 44th Japan Derby race.

ONE hundred and fifty thousand people flocked to a Tokyo racecourse and millions more watched the race on TV one day last May.

The event was the 44th running of the Japanese Derby — the most prestigious horse race in Japan — held at the Tokyo Racecourse at Fuchu in the capital's western suburbs on May 29.

The Derby race was the ninth and last but one of the races of the day and was preceded by a baton twirlers' parade accompanied by the Ground Self-Defense Force band.

The race began at 3:40 p.m. with a full-gate field of 28 leading three-year-old thoroughbred colts taking part. Starting in disadvantageous outside post, Lucky Ruler, with Masanori Ito in the saddle, shot out in front going into the first turn ahead of World Savannah, Hishi Speed and Press Toko. The top three were in that order when they rounded the second turn.

In the early part of the backstretch, Lucky Ruler took a three-length lead over World Savannah and the rest of the pack. Then, World Savannah surged up and replaced Lucky Ruler as the pace setter. The order remained unchanged through the third and fourth turns.

Going into the homestretch, little heralded Kaneminobu surged into the lead but Lucky Ruler regained it after a neck-and-neck race. Then Hard Barge, winner of this year's running of the Japanese 2,000 Guineas, moved in from outside to be locked in a battle with Lucky Ruler and Kaneminobu.

About 100 meters from the finish, Lucky Ruler poked his nose in front and holding off Hard Barge's drive, flashed across the finish line only by a head in front of the top prerace choice in a thrilling photo finish.

His winning time over the 2,400-meter distance on the fast track was 2 minutes 28.7 seconds. The colt from the Tokichi Ogata stables, won the coveted ¥52 million top purse for its owner Sadatoshi Yoshihara.

Ticket sales totaled a record ¥14,827,540,600 or about $50 million. Prizes for the first eight places totaled ¥106 million, the largest in the world.

Incidentally, the winning jockey is the son of another Derby winner, the late Seishiro Ito who rode his Tokumasa to victory in the fifth running of the Japanese Derby held at the same race track on April 29, 1936.

The Japanese Derby, inaugurated in 1932 at the





Top: Winner Masanori Ito and his Lucky Ruler receive a roaring applause from fans. Right: A triumphant Ito poses for the camera.

now defunct Meguro Racecourse in Tokyo, is one of Japan's five racing classics sponsored by the Japan Racing Association. The others are: Japanese Oaks, a fillies' Derby held at the Tokyo Racecourse a week before the Japanese Derby; Japanese 2,000 Guineas in April at the Nakayama Racecourse in Chiba Prefecture; Japanese St. Leger in the autumn at the Kyoto Racecourse, and the Japanese 1,000 Guineas in the spring at the Hanshin Racecourse in Hyogo Prefecture.

Big racing events other than these are the semi-annual Emperor's Cup and the Nakayama Grand Prix races in December.

Popular interest in racing has zoomed phenomenally in recent years, with betting ticket sales increasing by more than seven times during the past decade. More than 15 million fans turn out a year at the turfs across the country.

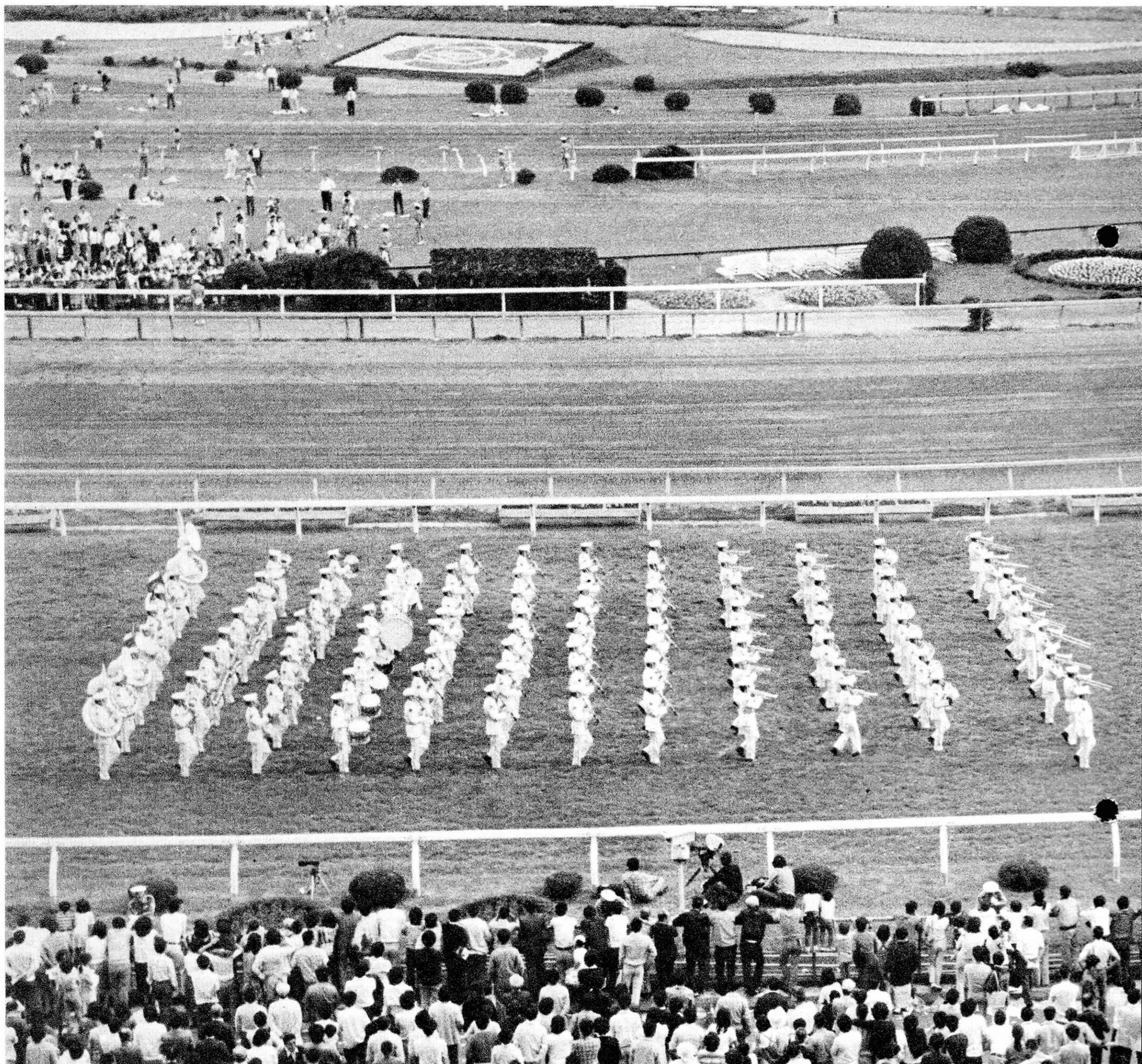
According to 1975 statistics, Japan ranks second in the world in terms of annual betting ticket sales: the U.S. \$7,645 million; Japan \$5,186; Britain \$3,044, and France \$2,933. Thus, in terms of per capita purchase, the Japanese outshine the Americans.

Sale of pari-mutuel betting tickets and payoffs are handled by the Japan Racing Association at its 10 racecourse and 14 off-course betting offices. The number of tickets sold off course is collated with the number sold on course before the posttime of the race. The racing program of Eastern and Western Japan is synchronized with the 9 off-course betting offices in and around Tokyo, selling principally for races held in Eastern Japan and the 5 offices in the environs of Osaka selling chiefly in Western Japan. However, betting tickets are sold on a nationwide basis for the five classic races and three of the listed stakes races.

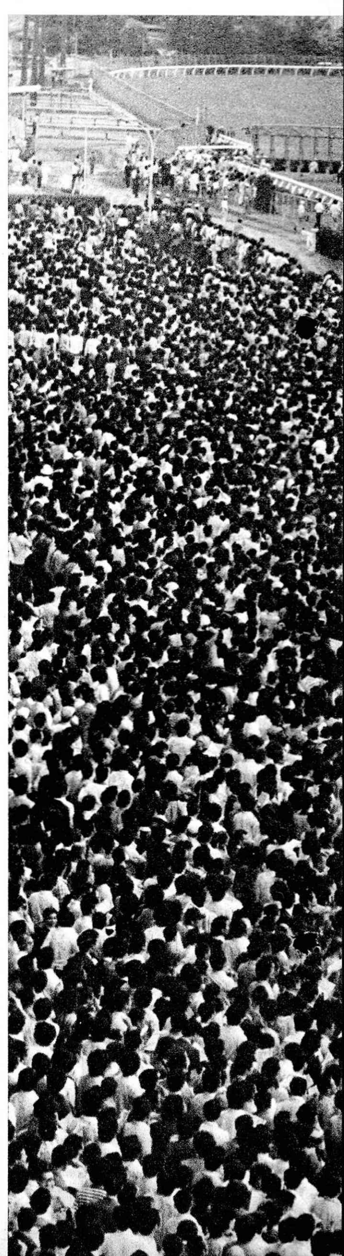
The pari-mutuel betting tickets sold by the Racing Association are win, place, show and either order forecast and the denominations are ¥200, ¥500 and ¥1,000. The either order forecast is the most popular form of betting by an overwhelming margin.

In the recent Derby, winner Lucky Ruler paid ¥1,960 to win and ¥610 to place. Runner-up Hard Barge paid ¥170 to place and third-place Kaneminobu ¥650 to show. A combination ticket of 4-7 paid ¥800.

The takeout percentage is about 25 per cent of turnover. Of the percentage paid into the National Treasury, three quarters are used for livestock industry promotion and a quarter for social welfare activities. (M.I.)







Top: Baton twirlers, with the aid of the Ground Self Defense Force band, help stir up a festive mood minutes before the race. Right: Derby racers circle around the paddock as the electric billboard flashes the rapidly changing odds. Far right: The gates open and the 28 colts dash off.







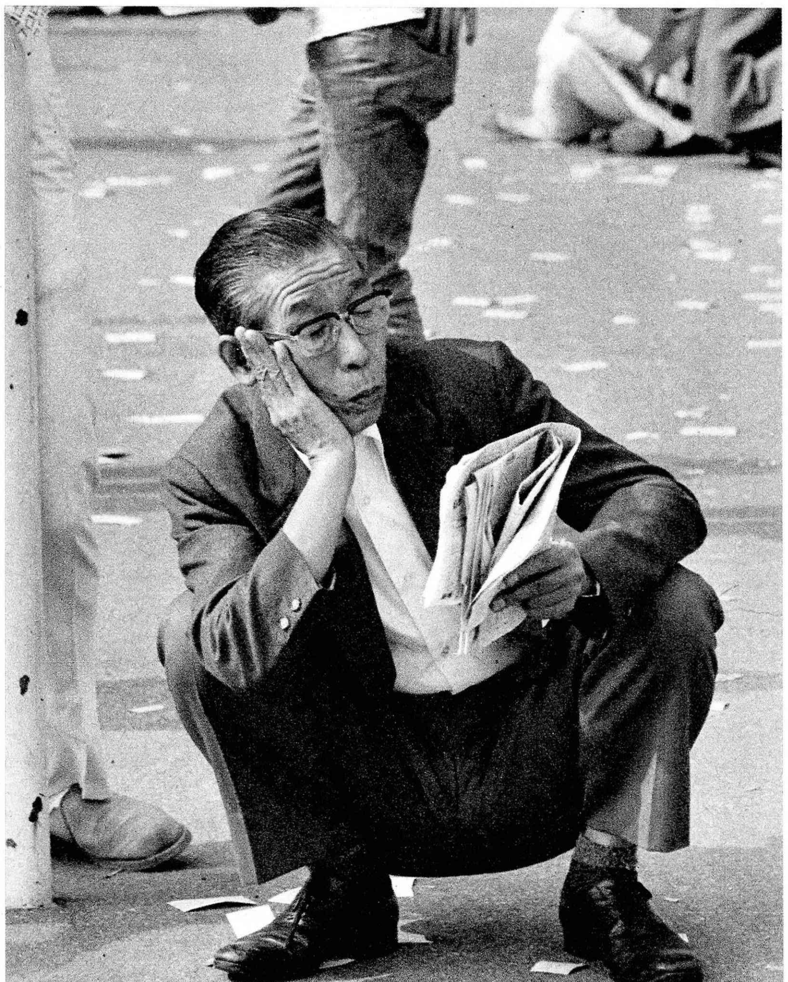
Excited spectators watch the steeds thunder past.

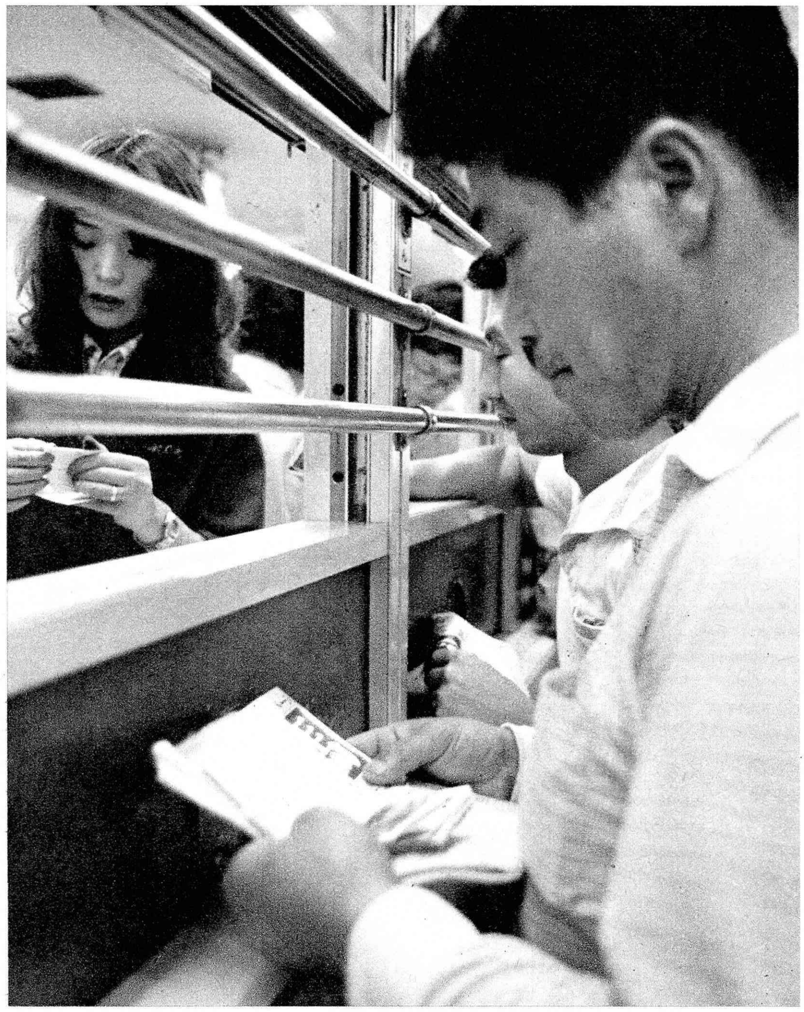


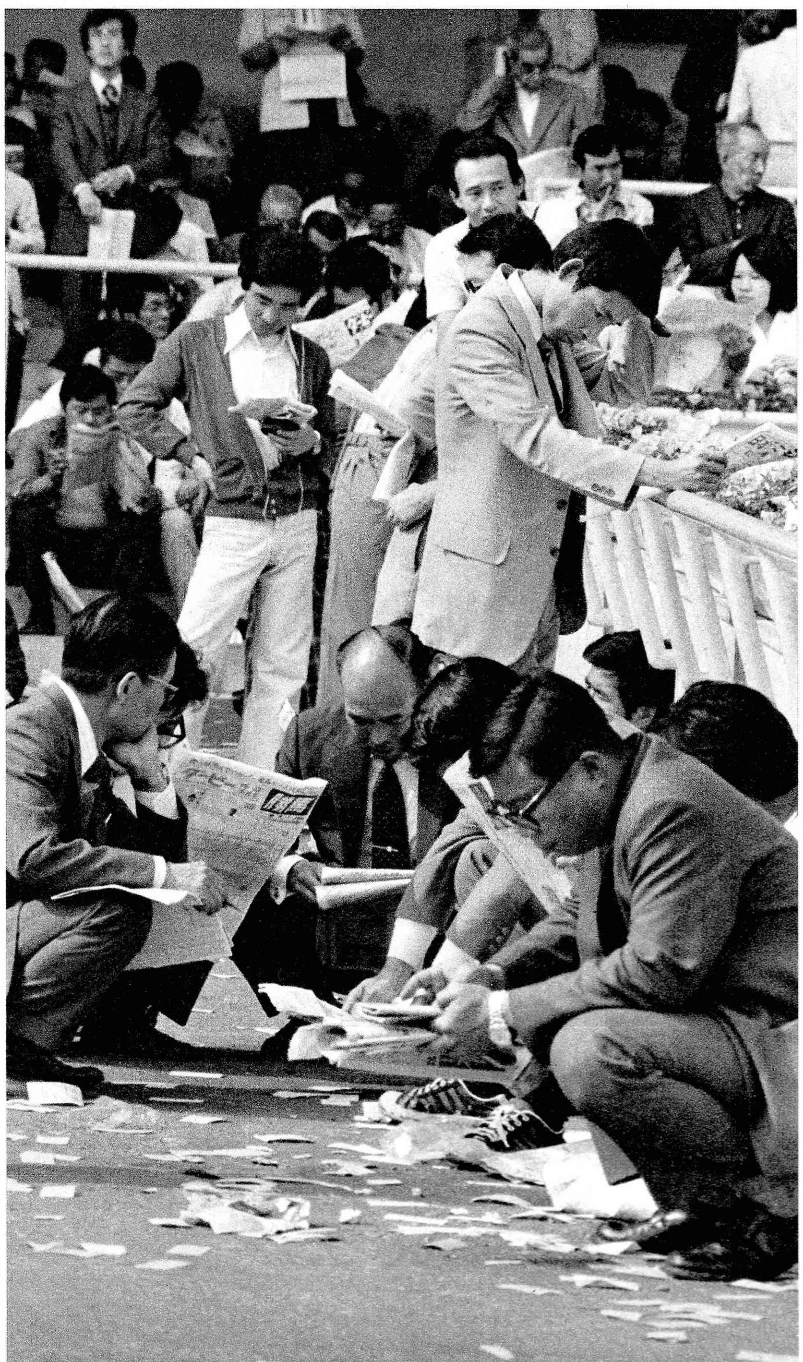
A few yards before the finish line, three front runners are locked in a battle, with Lucky Ruler poking his nose.

Betters solemnly contemplate the odds in tense prerace moments. Avid fans come equipped with binoculars, transistor radios and racing bulletins. Below: Crowds jam the ticket offices. Right: This chap cannot make up his mind yet.



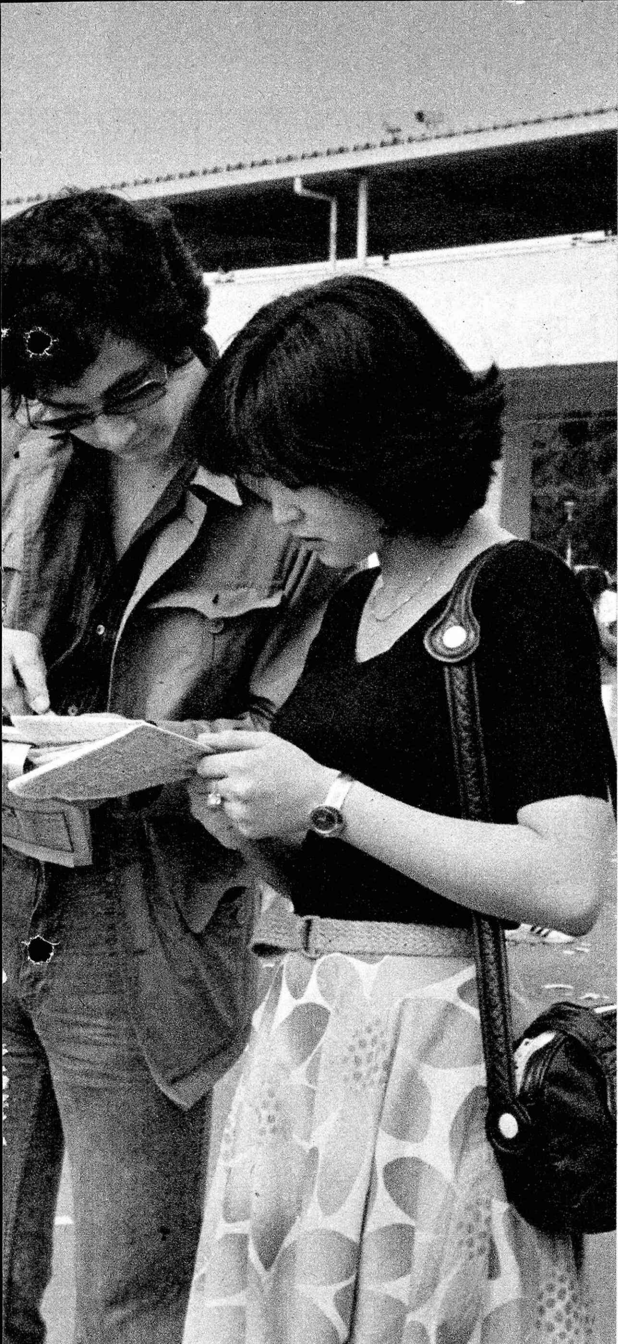


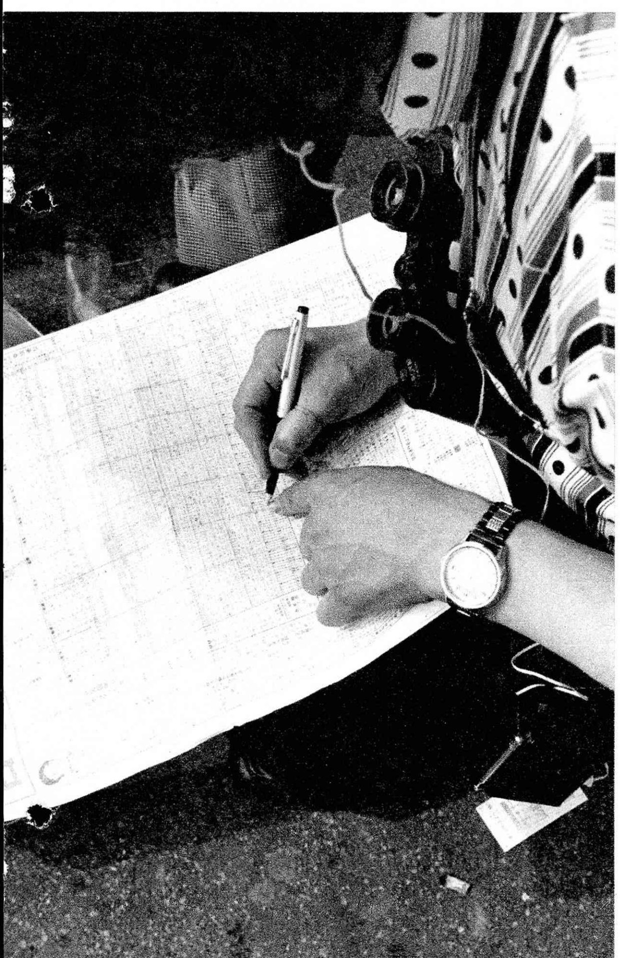




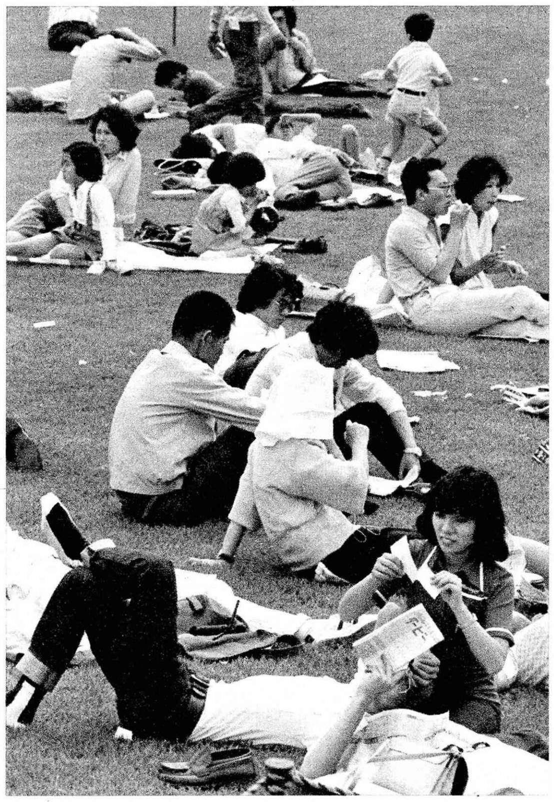


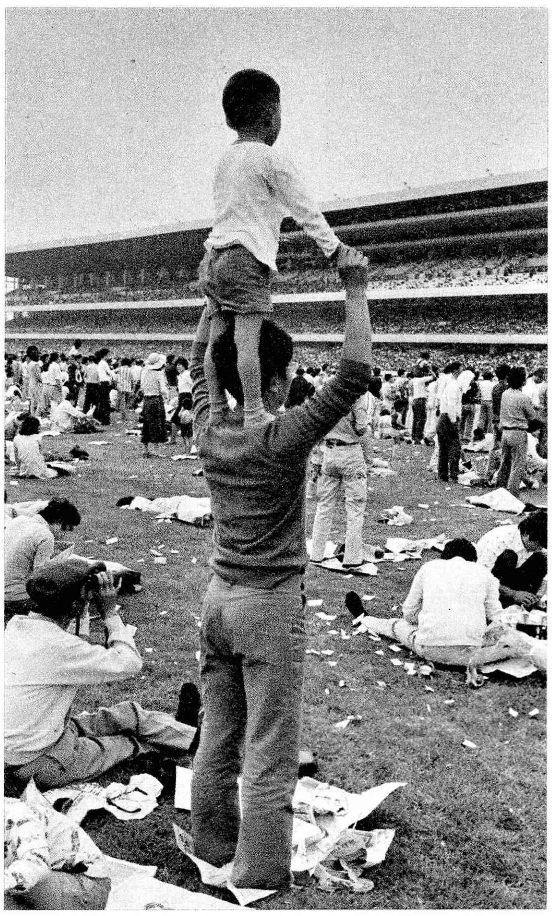


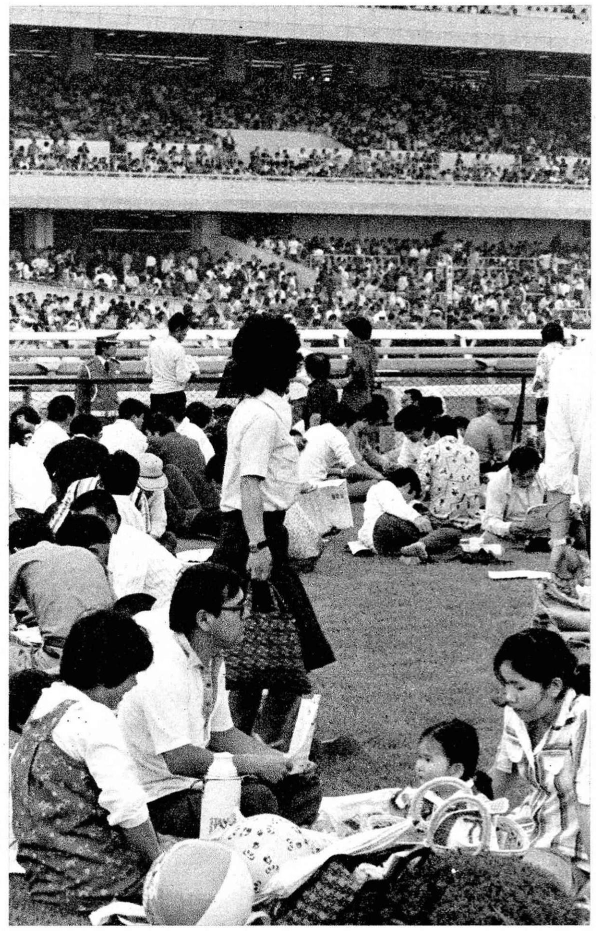


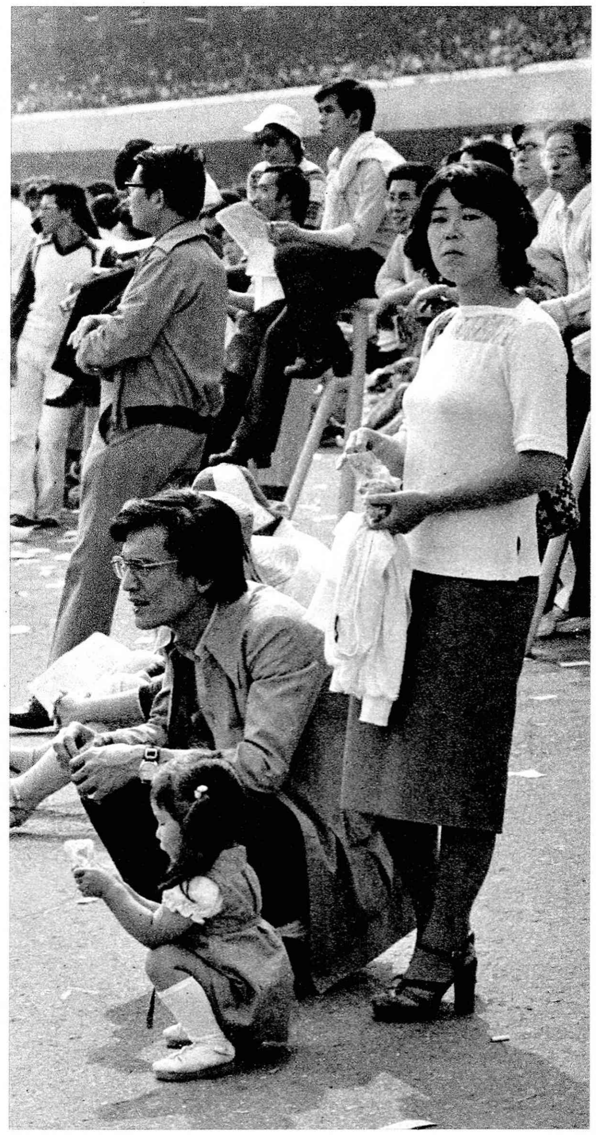


Many came to Fuchu not so much for betting as for picnicking and just rambling about.









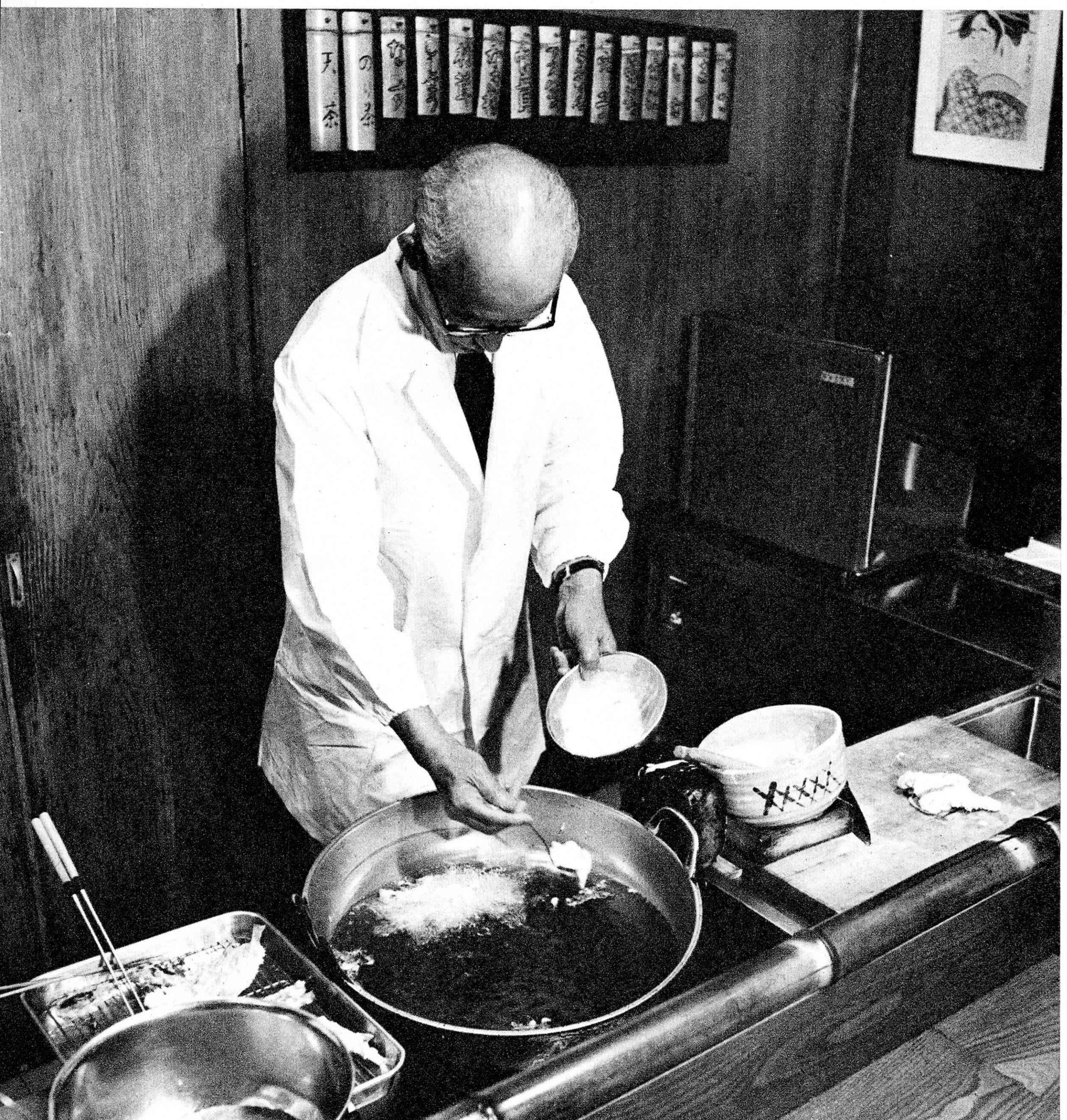
Tempura, Aromatic Japanese Fritters



Tendon is a tempura snack. It comprises a bowl of hot rice with fried prawns on top. Some pickled vegetables are served in the accompanying small dish.

Ask any foreigner which Japanese dishes he or she likes best and the answer will be almost invariably *tempura* and/or *sukiyaki. Yakitori,* chicken shish kebab à la japonaise, is also high on the popularity list, and among resident foreigners one will find a number of *sushi, sashimi* and *unagi* lovers.

But *tempura* is the undisputed king of Japanese food, sharing the honor with *sukiyaki.* These dishes enjoy more or less equal degree of popularity both among the Japanese and foreigners whereas in regard to the raw slices of fish fillet, a dish which was featured in our last issue, there is a decided difference in the popularity ratings between the two groups.



Mr. Isao Yabuki, proprietor of Ten-ichi Tempura Restaurant in Ginza, Tokyo, demonstrates his skill perfected in his 50-year cooking career. He is the author of an English-language booklet titled "The Special Foods of Tokyo."

Tempura, the aromatic Japanese fritter, is cooked both in the family kitchen and at restaurants of all levels, including the most exclusive — and expensive. Although quite a bit of mystique has been woven into it, *tempura* cooking is a simple affair as far as the principle goes. All one has to do is prepare a plateful of ingredients — prawns, fish fillet and vegetables sliced or cut into proper size, coat them in thin batter and fry in deep oil.

The only catch is that in order to have really good *tempura,* one must very carefully select the right ingredients, make batter with the right consistency, blend different kinds of oil in proper proportion and, above all, keep the cooking oil at an appropriate temperature. All this requires much experience and close attention.

The name "*tempura*" is said to have originated from the Portuguese word "tempero" meaning seasoning. Another theory traces it to the Spanish word for temple — templo. The recipe, it is believed, was introduced to Japan by Christian missionaries in the 17th century. The Japanese may have evolved the idea of frying slices of fish meat in vegetable oil when they saw European priests fry meat in fat.

Records show, however, that before the influx of Christian missionaries, Zen Buddhists had developed a cuisine known as *shojin-age* or vegetable fries and this might well be the prototype of what we call *tempura* today. *Shojin-age* has been an important part of the strictly vegetarian fare for Buddhist clergy, for whom fish, flesh and fowl were taboo in days gone by.

A large variety of vegetables can be used for *tempura* cooking. Any fresh vegetables and small fish of the season are good for *tempura* but one indispensable item is the prawn. A common *tempura* course begins with prawn *(ebi)* and ends with shrimp *(ebi)* fried in the *kakiage* fashion. *Kakiage* means a mixture of shrimp, scallop and chopped cuttlefish. Other popular fish ingredients for *tempura* include the sea-eel *(anago),* sillaginoid *(kisu),* flat-head fish *(megochi)* and whitebaits *(shirauo).* Fish of the season good for *tempura* include the sweet river trout *(ayu),* pond smelt *(wakasagi)* and goby *(haze).*

Among popular vegetable ingredients are *shiitake* mushrooms, eggplants, French beans, green peppers, honeyworts, carrots, persimmon leaves, *nori* (laver), chrysanthemum leaves, pumpkin and lotus roots. Vegetables of the season such as fresh bamboo shoots, young ginger roots, bracken and *matsutake* mushrooms are also relished very much.

Up to the 17th century, cooking oil used to be considered something quite precious in Japan as its output was limited. Sesame oil was particularly expensive and fried food was rarely served even on the tables of nobles and priests. It was only after colza (rape) was first imported from China in the early 17th century that *tempura* became available even in the commoner's home.

As rapeseeds came to be grown abundantly, oil

refiners thrived and some cunning oil merchants would add a little sesame *(goma)* oil to colza oil to enhance the aroma and pretend that it was sesame oil. Hence, according to a theory of rather dubious authenticity, the idiom *''gomakasu''* meaning cheat or whitewash.

Discriminating gourmets prefer a mixture of oils made from sesame seeds and corn or rapeseeds. Reputable *tempura* houses have their own formulas for blending different kinds of oil, which they guard jealously as business secret.



A plate of tempura ringed by dishes with grated radish, quartered lemon and tempura sauce, a sake set and a square dish of salad

Tempura Recipe for You

Peel prawns, slit small fish and cut the fillet of larger fish into bite-size. Cut or slice vegetables into proper size.

Before preparing *tempura* batter, turn on the cooking stove under a deep frying pan with cooking oil in it. Olive and soybean oil may be substituted for sesame or corn oil.

To make the *tempura* batter, first beat two eggs in a bowl. Add one cup of water to the beaten eggs and mix thoroughly. Put three cups of sifted flour into the liquid and mix quickly. Don't beat the batter too hard or it will become too heavy to make thin crispy coating.

When the cooking oil becomes hot enough (175-180 degrees Centigrade or 350 degrees Fahrenheit), slip the ingredients into the batter and slide them into the pan. Don't put too many at a time lest the temperature of the oil go down. When frying vegetables, put the harder ones first.

Wait till the surface of the ingredients turns light yellow and then turn them over. Turn a few times until the batter becomes brownish yellow. Drain the cooked *tempura* on the grid. Then arrange the drained fritters on the plate covered with a thick white paper napkins. This is for absorbing excess oil.

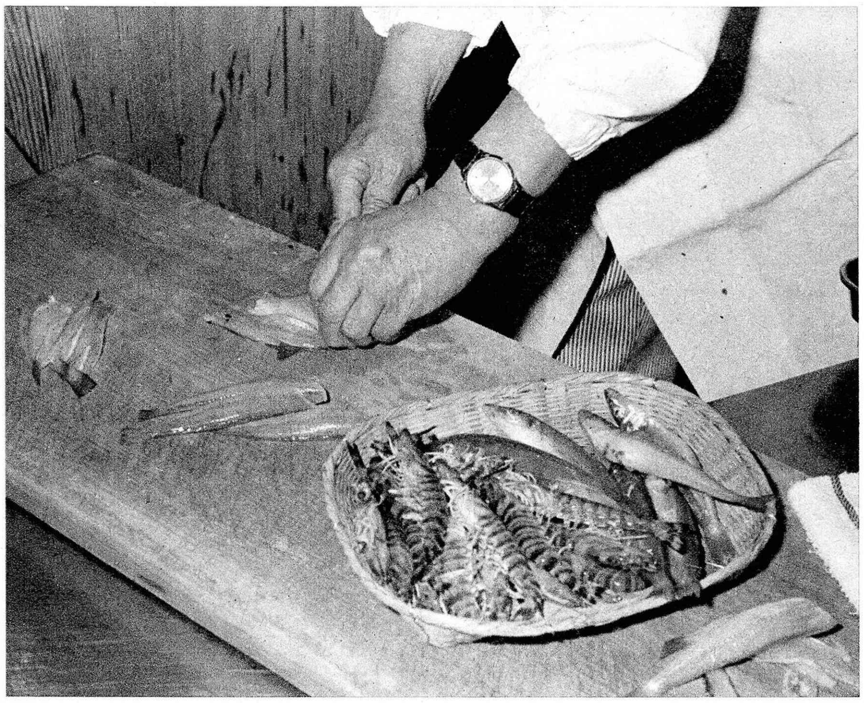
The *tempura* dish is served with special sauce in individual bowls. Add grated radish. Some prefer to have grated ginger in addition. *Tempura* can also be eaten with a pinch of salt or lemon juice instead of the sauce.

To make *tempura* sauce, prepare *dashi* or Japanese soup stock made of dried bonito shavings and strips of tangle. Bring *dashi,* soy sauce and sake to a boil and serve while still warm. When in a hurry, you can season the *dashi* with monosodium glutamate.

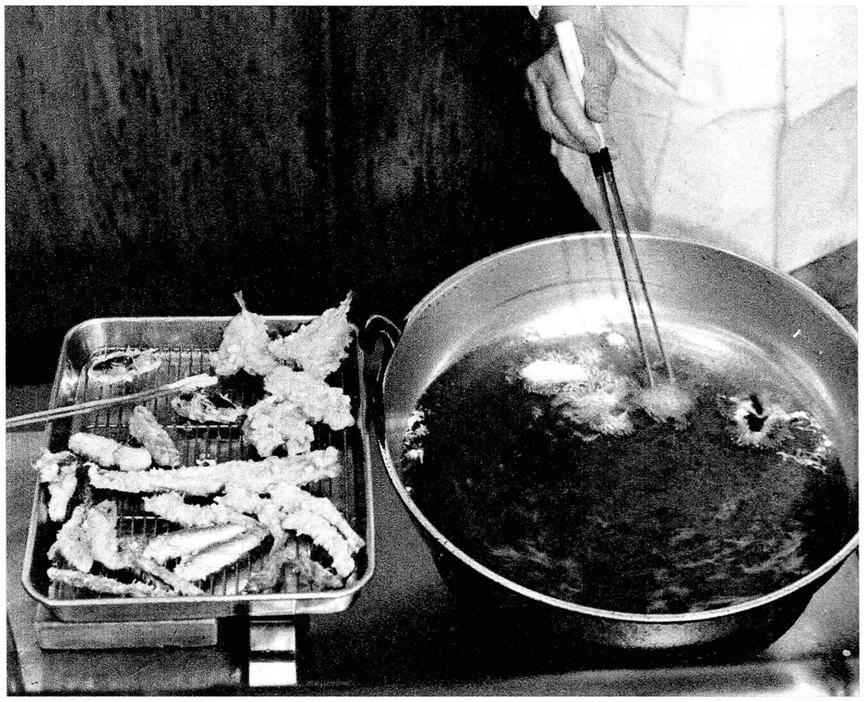
Tempura tastes best when eaten hot. Better-known *tempura* restaurants have cooking bars, where the chef serves sizzling hot fritters over the counter. (S.S.)



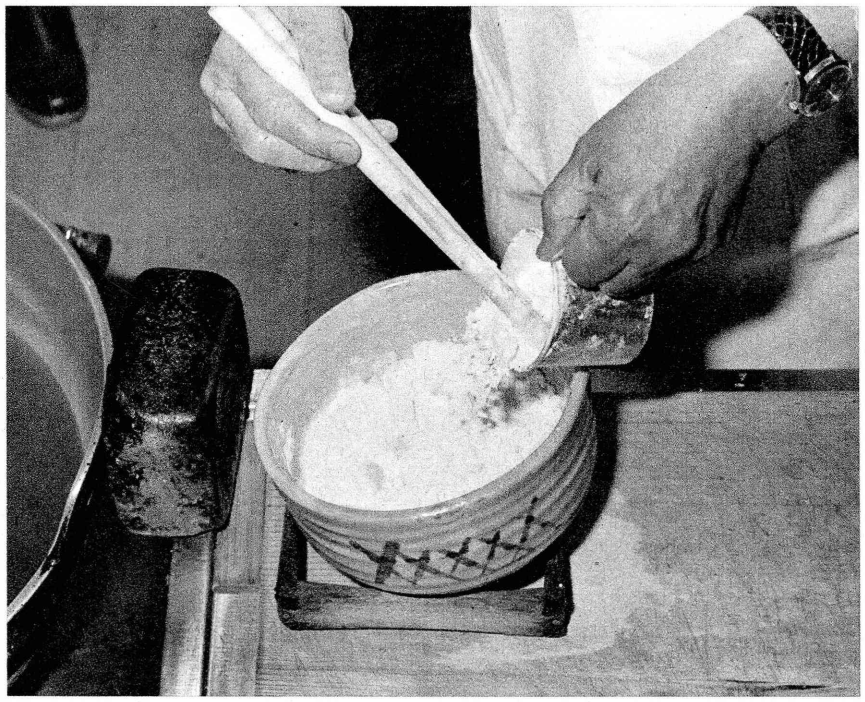
A typical tempura bar, where the diners sample sizzling fritters while watching the chef in action



①



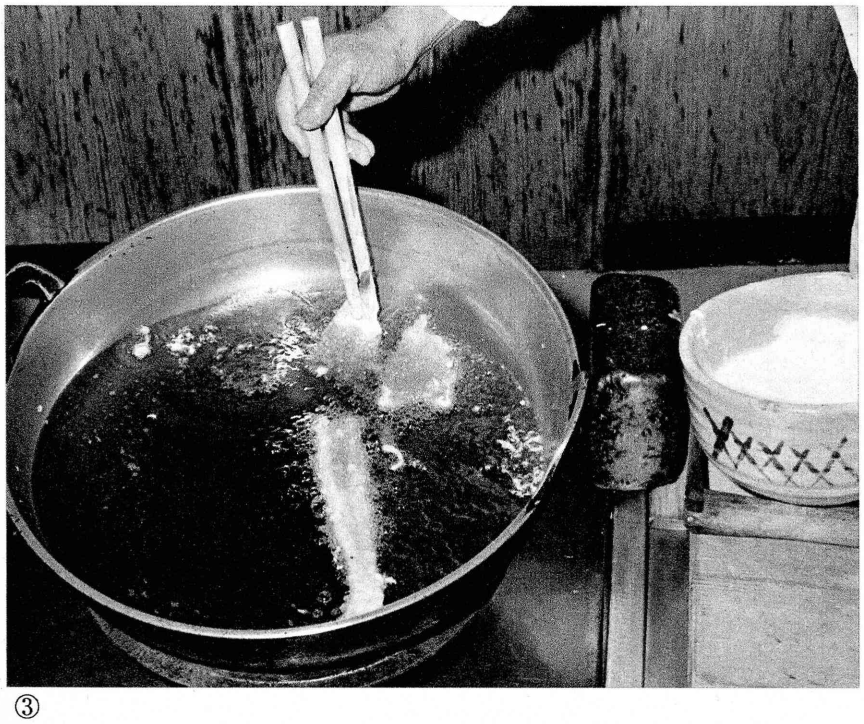
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②



⑤



③

①Dressing the fish, ② Mixing flour with egg-and-water mixture to make tempura batter, ③ Deep frying the ingredients, ④ Turning them over until golden brown and ⑤ Arranging the fritters on a plate.



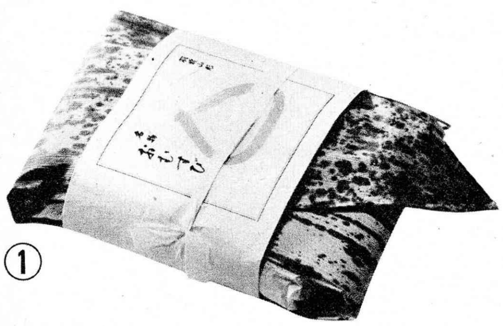


Above: Fresh ingredients neatly arranged in bamboo baskets, ready for the tempura pan
Left: Sizzling fritters ready for the table

Packaging

By Patricia Massy

IT'S a rustic earthenware sake bottle topped with a small sake cup. Off comes the cup, out comes the plug, and — what have we here? Fermented trout entrails! There has been no mistake. This is just another example of the Japanese genius for packaging. Actually the sake bottle is a perfect container because the fish is greatly prized by gourmets as an accompaniment for sake. Whoever receives this savory will certainly also appreciate the bottle.



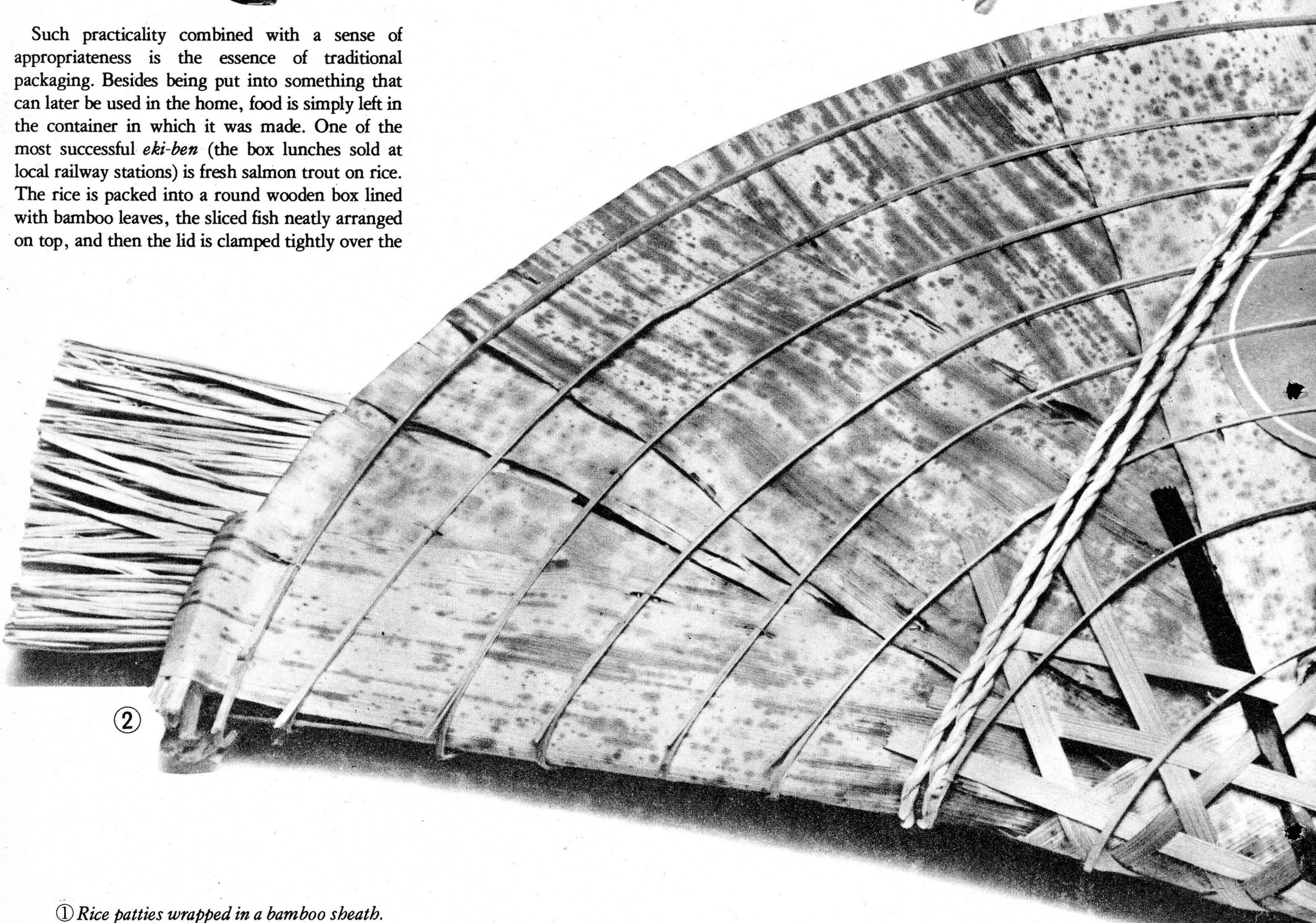
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Such practicality combined with a sense of appropriateness is the essence of traditional packaging. Besides being put into something that can later be used in the home, food is simply left in the container in which it was made. One of the most successful *eki-ben* (the box lunches sold at local railway stations) is fresh salmon trout on rice. The rice is packed into a round wooden box lined with bamboo leaves, the sliced fish neatly arranged on top, and then the lid is clamped tightly over the contents by means of two sets of bamboo sticks bound together at the ends. Not only is the food preserved by the air-tight pressure, but it looks all the more appetizing in this contrivance. The leaves, too, are more than mere decoration. Since ancient times, it has been known that they keep food from spoiling.

Of course, the Japanese developed beyond the leaf-plate stage over a millenium ago, but they still treasure the feel of natural materials. Leaves remain a favorite. All sorts of ingenious ways have been invented for putting them to use, such as filling them with sweet dumplings. When the sweets are steamed, the scent of the leaf permeates the rice, which is more than half of the goodness. Besides, because they are tied together in sets, they are easy to carry home.

The attraction of leaves or pure white wood can be summed up with the word mood. Although *natto* beans were originally bundled in straw for want of a better or cheaper material, the rural mood that it imparts became as important as the contents themselves. Mushrooms are presented in a basket filled with ferns and a snack of rice patties is wrapped in a speckled bamboo sheath, fuzzy on the outside and glossy inside. What could be more appealing than golden persimmon jelly molded into the green freshness of a section of split bamboo?

In fact, to achieve the right atmosphere the packaging often outclasses the contents. Confectionery shops take great pride in creations of fantasy that reach into a dream world of color, textures, and calligraphy. For tea time, how about



②

① Rice patties wrapped in a bamboo sheath.
② Sea bream nestled in a folded coolie hat of bamboo sheaths has been a souvenir of the Inland Sea since the feudal period.

an Illusion

discovering on your plate an exquisitely folded pastel paper inscribed with a romantic poem. Inside, resting on a design of autumn grasses, is a cake in the shape of a crescent moon. No matter really how the cake tastes. To bite into that delicate morsel is to consume the poem, the pitcture, and the paper as well.

HERE the differentiation between cover and contents disappears. One cannot exist without the other. Pound cakes always used to be given in a box of unfinished pine with the name of the maker burnt into the lid. Now that these boxes are being replaced by cardboard, the cake no longer tastes as good, perhaps because it has lost the fragrance of the wood. Or maybe that fragrance was just in the mind after all. For instance, I have a collection of little boxes covered with charming paper. Having once held sweets given as favors at dance recitals, they always bring back the taste of the sugar and the vision of the dancers. The ultimate in oneness between wrapper and contents are the cakes nestled in a folded cherry leaf. Everything is to be eaten.

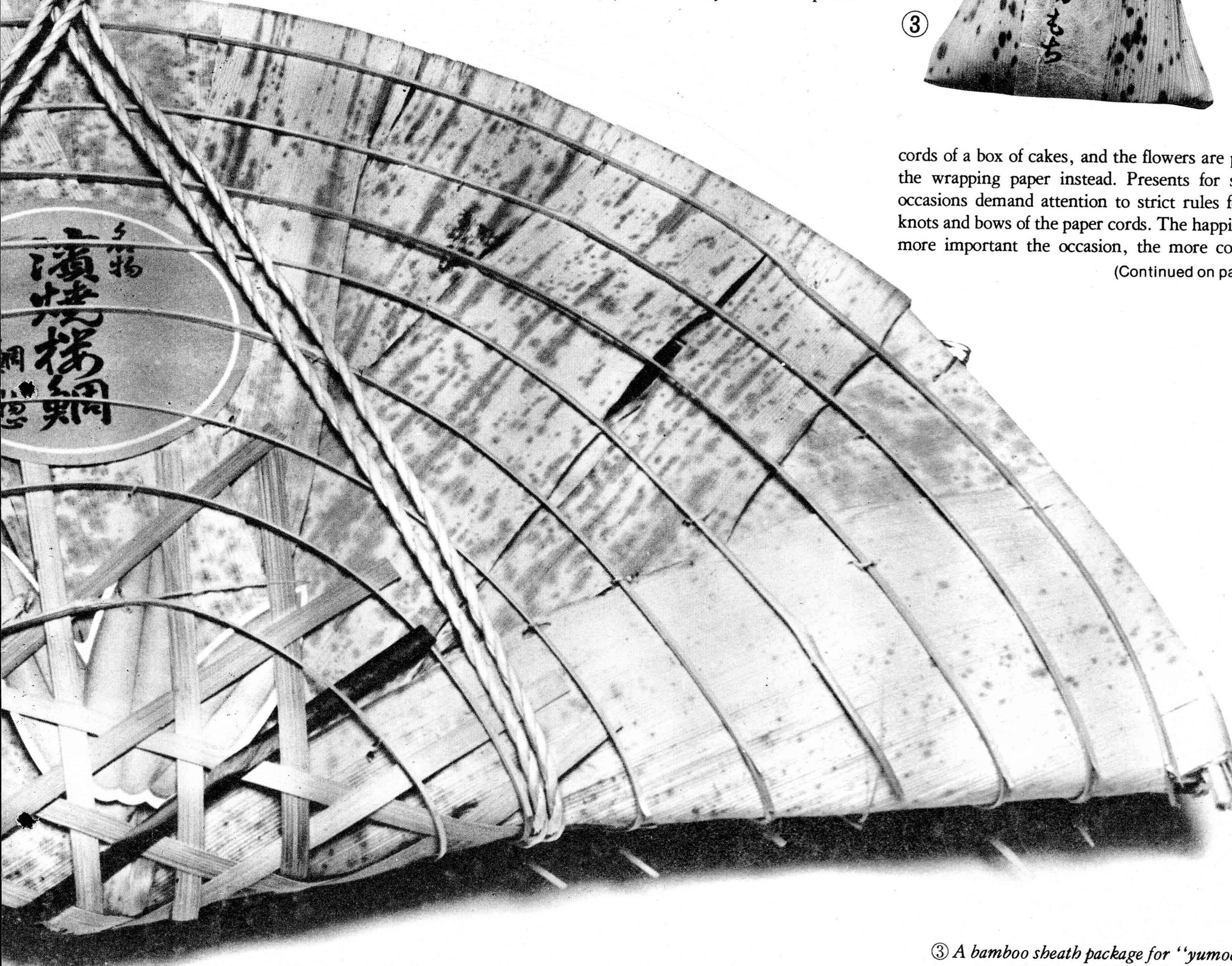
It may seem rather quaint to treat ordinary sweets or fishy insides so nobly. But in Japan nothing is too insignificant to have value. That is one of the lessons of *haiku,* also of tea ceremony. It therefore comes as no surprise to hear that the noted tea master-aesthetician of the 16th century, Sen-no Rikyu, was deeply impressed by the simple beauty of the wrapped bamboo leaves. Also, until comparatively recently cakes were a treat that few people could enjoy often. They deserved special attention. They still do, except that people unfortunately forget to value whatever is abundant or easy to obtain.

Above all, though, Japanese love to give gifts and to present them in style. In the tenth century, love poems were carefully folded and tied to a spray of flowering cherry or a branch of autumn leaves. Now the confectioner inserts a poem under the cords of a box of cakes, and the flowers are part of the wrapping paper instead. Presents for special occasions demand attention to strict rules for the knots and bows of the paper cords. The happier and more important the occasion, the more complex

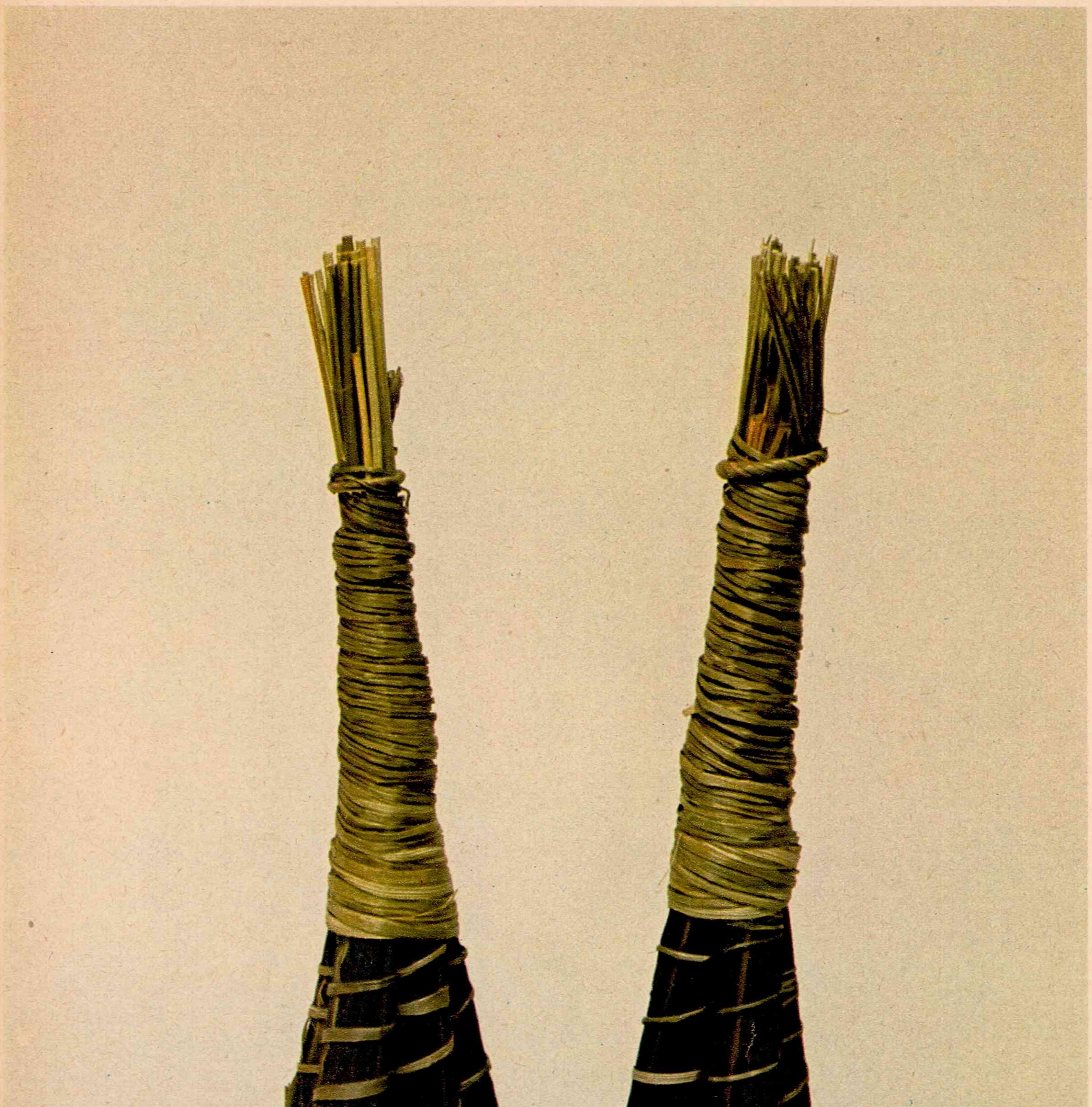
(Continued on page 30)



③



③ *A bamboo sheath package for "yumochi," a specialty of Yumoto, Hakone.*



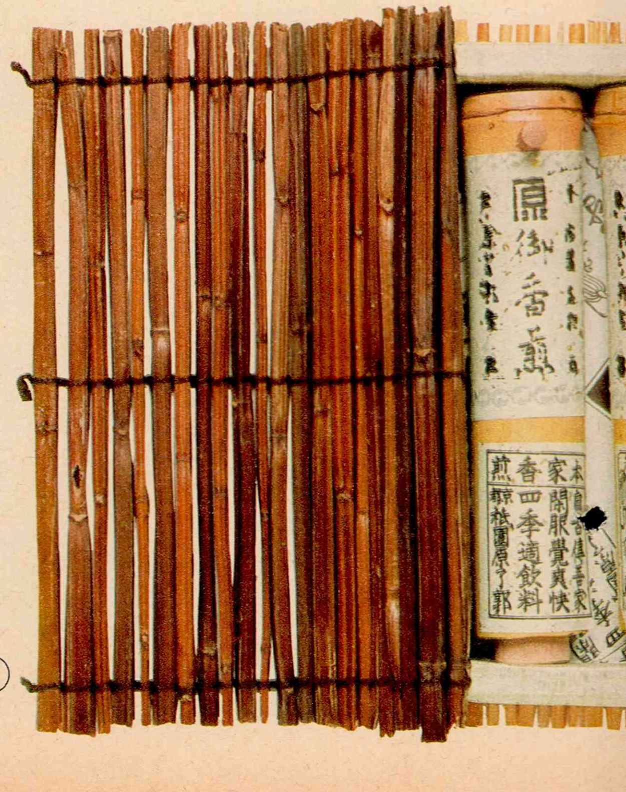
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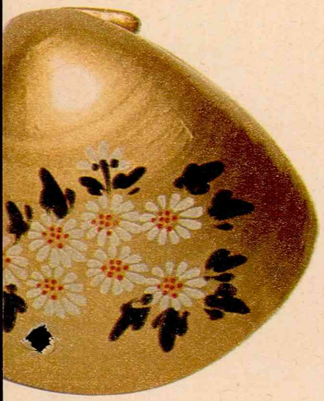
Ingeniously wrapped in bamboo leaves, chimaki steamed dumplings are a must for Children's Festival in May. A variety of sushi is also served in this manner.







②







⑤



⑥

1. *A rare sight nowadays, vinegar is still packed by the Marukan company in wooden kegs bound with bamboo hoops or in handmade pottery vats. The trademark was created some 400 years ago by an anonymous genius of design.* 2. *Sake still comes in the traditional straw wrapper that protects the wooden keg.* 3. *Sugar sweets are hidden inside a clam shell decorated like those used in the game of matching shells.* 4. *These bamboo tubes contain o-kosen, spiced rice powder for making a hot drink. The containers are encased in a box made of bamboo strips.* 5. *The clean, white beauty of dried noodles is accented by colored paper bands and the bold lines of calligraphy.* 6. *The versatile, indispensable furoshiki is a cloth square that keeps any bundle of packages neat and easy to carry. Various sizes as well as elegant embroidered versions are available.*

(Continued from page 27)
the decorations become. The most highly decorated package is the traditionally attired bride, whose hair is tied very much like the wedding gifts.

Indeed, packages are clothes. To give anything at all unwrapped is quite rude, but especially money. If one has not been able to obtain one of the proper envelopes designed for giving money — lovely creations they are, too — or at least some paper to wrap it in, the expression of apology is "Please excuse it for being naked." Like clothing the body, a present should also be dressed properly. How much more pleasant to receive a fish adorned in a coolie hat or incense in a five-layered kimono of handmade paper than in a brown paper bag!

The leaf, the paper, the basket serve to set the object apart from our mundane, humdrum existence. While protecting it, they elevate it to a higher plane. One designer calls this a "ritual of purification." Few people would ever take a present to someone without again wrapping it in that most versatile of all wrappers, the cloth square called *furoshiki.* The present thus will be assured of arriving unsoiled by hands or curious looks. It is also consideration for the object itself. New or borrowed books are immediately covered with a jacket, tables are protected with a cloth, and pottery of even the least value is kept in a custom-made box.

In this age when time is money, the use of natural materials and the fabrication of beautiful containers is succumbing to plastic simulations. Caterpillar green plastic tubes that are supposed to resemble bamboo and plastic cherry leaves numb the senses. However, the Japanese love for capturing an illusion will surely continue to guide package design toward new creations that are perfect complements for the contents.

All the photographs appearing on these pages have been made available by Rikuyosha, publishers of "package design in japan" (¥10,000), except the small picture of "yumochi" on P. 27, another at the left-hand side of P. 28 and one of "furoshiki" appearing on P. 29.

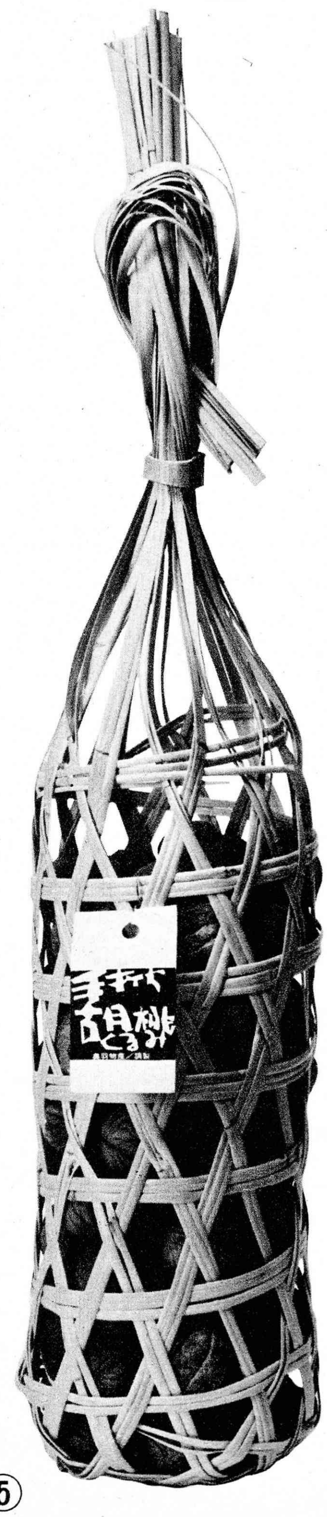
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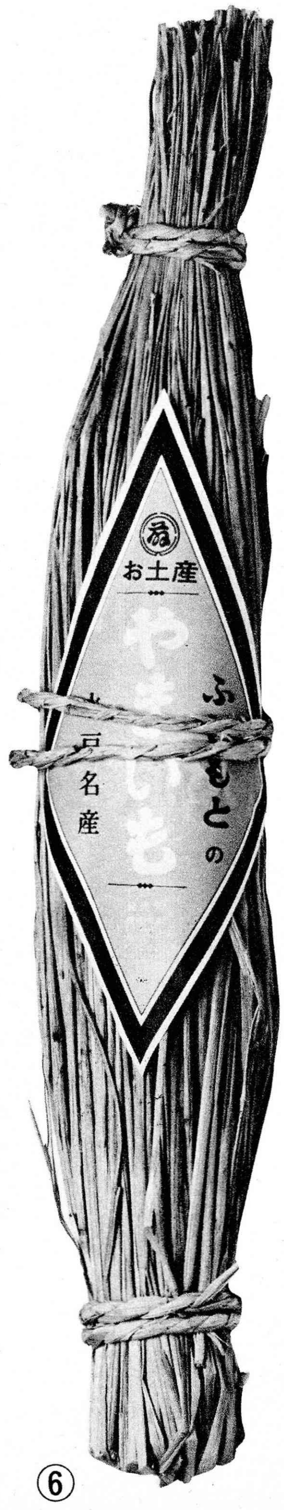


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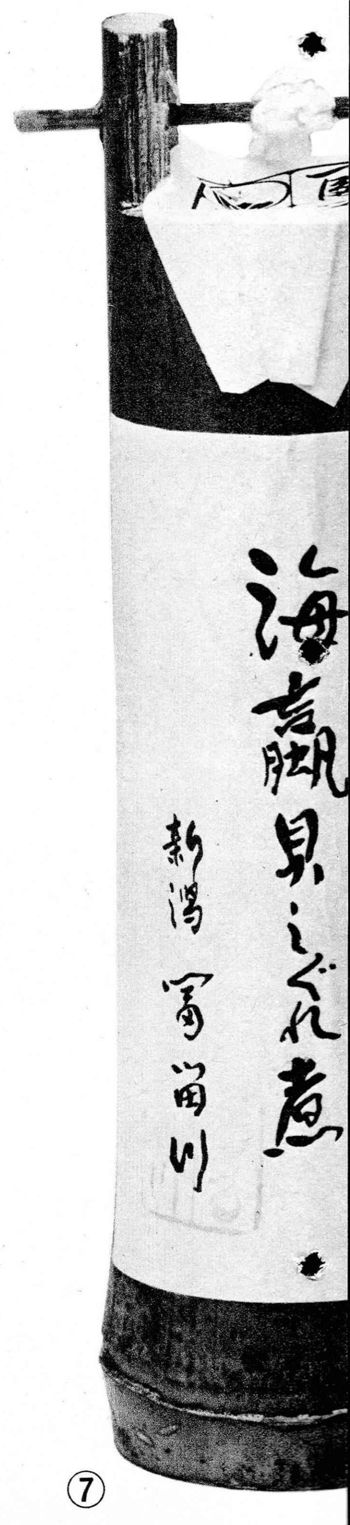




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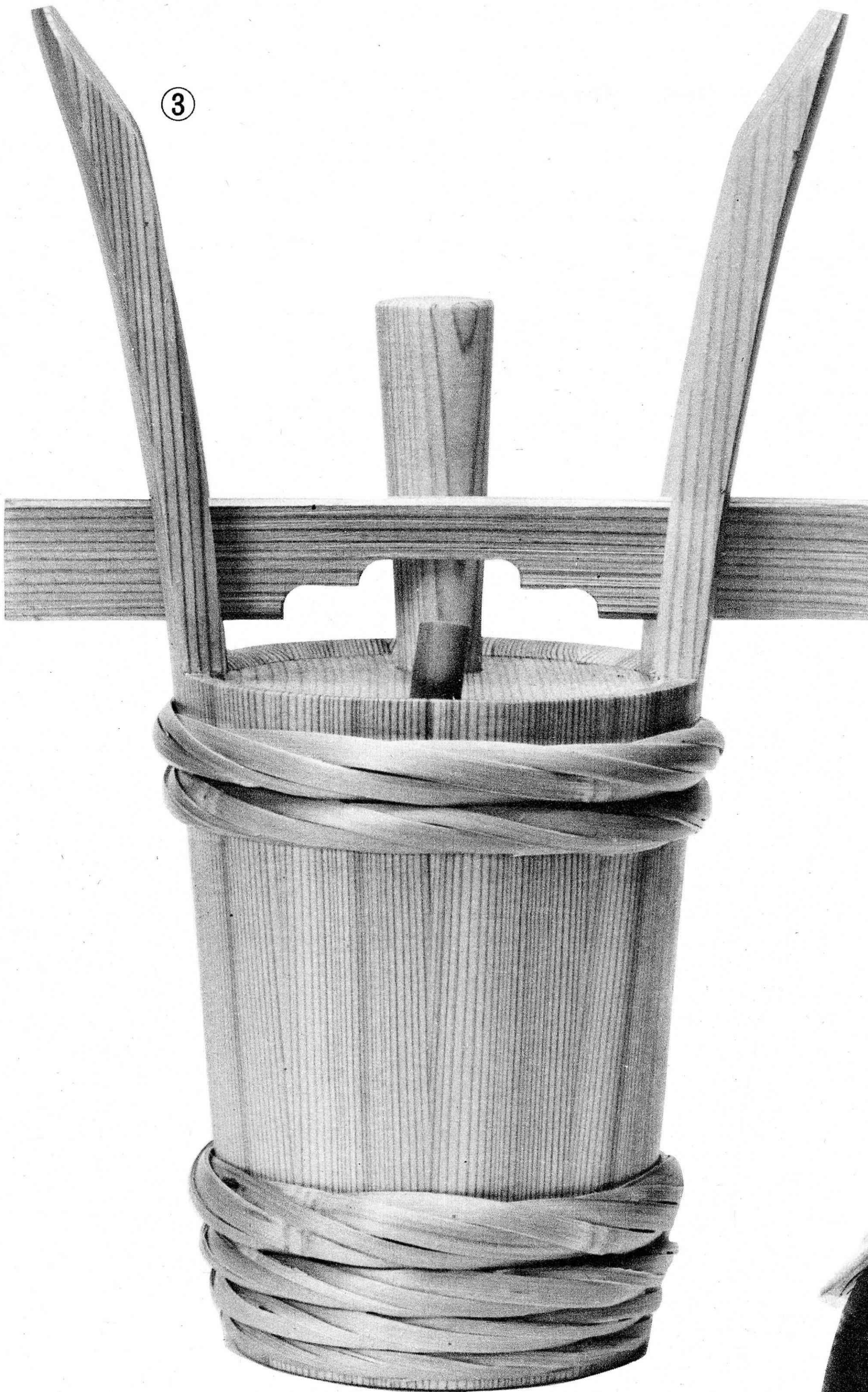
⑦

①Egg-shaped cakes in an open bamboo basket express both humor and beauty.
②From the deep country comes candy packed like a bale of rice.
③The wooden pail for sake is one of the most beautiful of all designs. Strangely, a similar bucket is found in Scandinavia.
④The maker of this bean paste has considerately packed it in a pot that can be kept for later use.
⑤⑥Walnuts in a woven bamboo case and taro root in straw packing display the practical use of natural materials.
⑦The handiest of containers, bamboo tubes lend a rustic mood to a condiment of scallops.
⑧This wooden package contains chestnut sweets.
⑨The rural flavor of local sake is brought out by the earthenware bottle that comes with its own cup.





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⑧

Pachinko, Yesterday and Today

Photos by Toru Mizuno

By Peter A. Spagnola





Color page: Flashy neon signs of mammoth pachinko joints are in keeping with the gaudiness of their interior.



Modern pachinko joints are fully illuminated and air-conditioned. The constant jangling of hundreds of steel balls and loud background music create a peculiar atmosphere.

THE name of the game is change. And no game better fits this description than *pachinko*. Why I remember, and not too long ago, either, that far 100 yen you could get 50 balls, stand in front of the machine, pump in the balls with your left hand and flip the lever with your right. Believe me, in those days, it took skill to coordinate these two almost simultaneous movements. Imagine holding 30 or 40 small steel balls in your left hand, and with the flick of your thumb, much like shooting marbles left-handed, make each ball go into a hole not much bigger than the size of the ball itself! No sooner would you get the ball into the hole than you had to be ready to flip the lever with your right thumb. This called for shutter-fast timing and reflex if you wanted the ball to loop into the small space between the two particular pins you were aiming at. What's more, to keep this rhythm going until you used up all the balls you were holding in the palm of your left hand was a skill no novice could readily master.

How well I remember the first time I played some nine years ago! Not only did I spend half of the time picking up the balls I had dropped on the floor, but I got 3 or 4 balls in before I realized I hadn't flipped the lever yet! It was really frustrating . . . and tiring, too, if you played for more than an hour. But, practice made perfect, and it wasn't too long before my coordination had improved and I was holding my own against the best of them. I was now hooked on *pachinko*. With the clumsiness over, the muscles in my legs built up to overcome the fatigue from standing hour after hour, my mind oblivious of the seemingly endless strains of the Stars and Stripes blaring from the speakers, my lungs now adjusted to the smoke-filled air — I was doing my thing. Don't ask me how I did it because I really couldn't tell you. To this day I still don't know how I stood all that noise, sweat, strain and discomfort. But that's how it used to be.

Now, let me tell you how it is today. As I said earlier, the name of the game is change. Yes, the age of automation has brought convenience, comfort and relaxation to the game. I think the particular *pachinko* parlor I go to in Akasaka may well illustrate this, as it is representative of the parlors that are being built today.

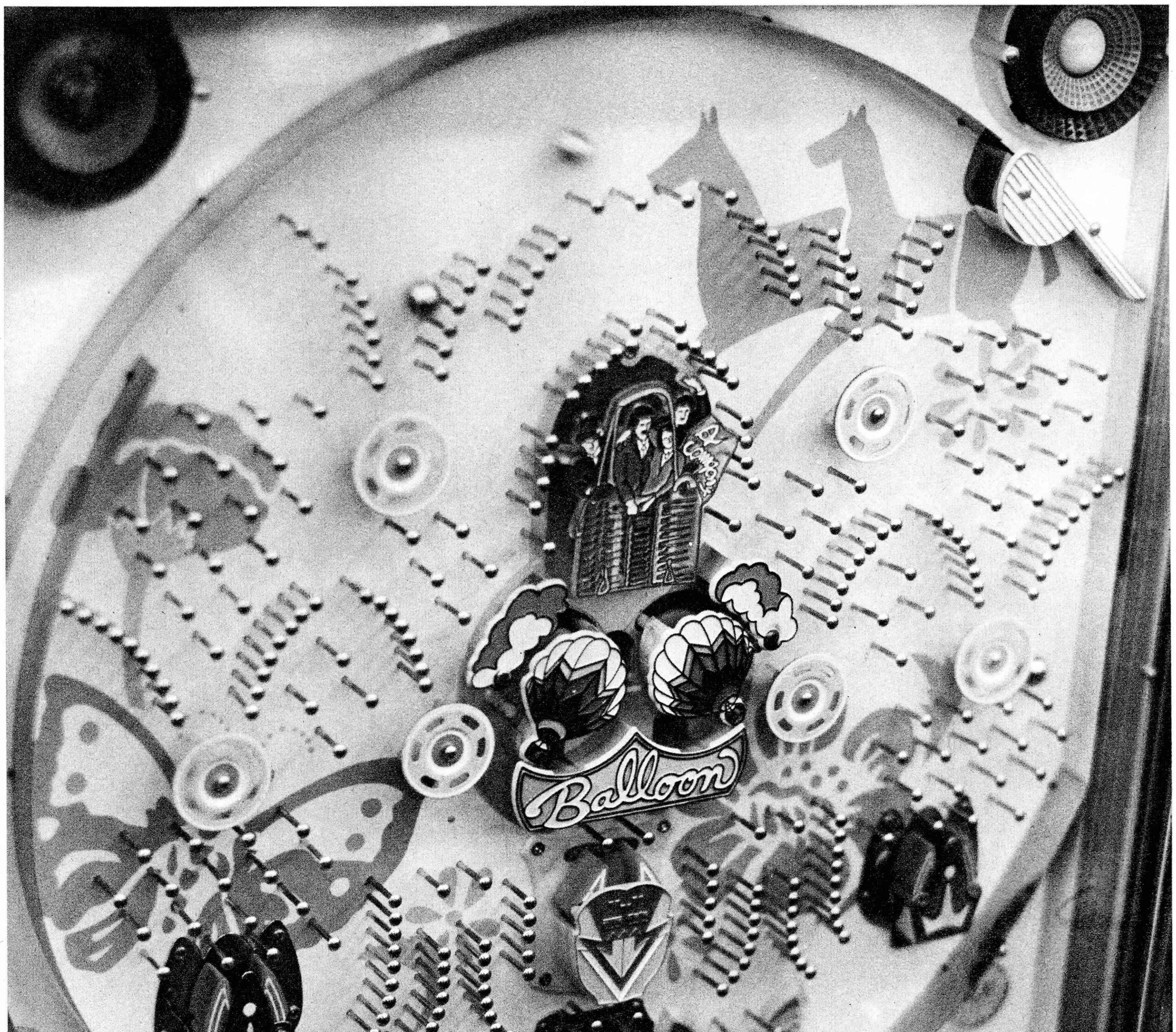
Let me describe it to you. First of all, it's a big, garish-looking place that must hold about three to four hundred people. But then, they have to be if they want to attract customers, don't they? After all, there is something circus-like about them — I mean — that's their nature. But notice the changes. They are now centrally air-conditioned and heated. You sit on a cushioned seat with plenty of leg room. The music is still rather loud but then you're listening to the latest popular Japanese and Western hit songs with only the occasional march at noon and 5:00 p.m. heralding the beginning of the peak hours. Of course, your 100 yen doesn't buy as much as it used to. A mere 35 balls are all you get these days. (The parlor owners claim that the 1973 oil crisis is to blame!) Each machine has its own coin slot and supply of balls. Should you be winning, the supply is automatically replenished. There's no need to hand-feed the balls nor flip a lever. A simple turn of the knob does all this for you. And if you choose to wedge a 10-yen coin in the knob handle, it will remain at the degree of turn leaving both your hands free to do whatever you like.

To increase patronage, the parlor attendants pass out a small piece of paper with a number printed on it to each row of players every hour or so. Several lucky number holders are announced over the public address system and they promptly go up to the counter to collect some prize worth a few hundred yen. Today's parlors usually have several machines which are for exclusive female use. Naturally, these are the ones that usually produce. Consequently, there are a lot more girls enjoying the game these days than before.

Another highly attractive feature of today's parlors is that there is a much greater variety of goods to cash your balls in for than before. Fruit, golf clubs, underwear, cigarette lighters, ice cream — you name it, they have it! But again, the ugly arm of inflation has touched here, too. It takes a lot more balls to get a jar of instant coffee than it used to. But, all in all, everyone seems to have a good time despite the fact that you lose more often than not. Like Las Vegas, the house has the advantage and the odds are against you. But then, if you already realize this, you're not too disappointed when you lose, or at least, you shouldn't be.

To make a long story short, *pachinko* is a simple and fun kind of thing. It may never replace sex or golf, but it's worth a try if you've never experienced it. It provides a pleasant opportunity to get out and mix with the Japanese people. Just don't get hooked on it, because you could be counting balls instead of sheep!

Peter A. Spagnola, news announcer with the Japan Broadcasting Corporation, is a longtime resident of Tokyo.







Above: Steel balls whirl around the playing area and bounce against the nails and wheels before finding their way into winning holes.

Right: Computer controls the machines in modern pachinko parlors. Far right: A pachinko aficionado absorbed in the game

Women players are no longer a rare phenomenon. In fact, they account for one fifth of pachinko clientele.







A variety of prizes are offered these days, including toilet goods, cigarettes, candy, canned food, sporting goods and even books.



The King of Mass Entertainment

Ten thousand *pachinko* parlors in all of Japan, grossing 1.5 trillion yen a year! This, indeed, is a phenomenon to be reckoned with.

Of the 29 stations on the Japanese National Railways' loop line in Tokyo, only two are without pinball houses operating on their premises. Near suburban line terminals, there are many of these noisy establishments and during late afternoon rush hours, all are crowded with office workers on their way home.

Although opening of new *pachinko* houses has levelled off lately, the number of jumbo parlors with 400 to 500 machines is on the increase. The interior of these establishments has become more elaborate.

While *pachinko* used to be a man's pastime, distaff patronage has increased steadily in recent years and now accounts for 20 per cent of the total clientele.

Japan's *pachinko* business originated from the pinball machines imported from the U.S. about 60 years ago. At first the gadgets were of the horizontal type but later changed into the vertical type we have today.

In their early years of development, *pachinko* machines were the playthings strictly for the very young, who were rewarded with cheap candy for their winning balls. In the days before World War II, only a few hundred roadside stall keepers were in *pachinko* business.

In the bleak postwar years, the Japanese, with little to eat and even less to amuse themselves with, took to *pachinko* — a cheap recreation that satisfied their modest gambling instincts. The pinball business grew steadily year by year since then despite the many new recreational opportunities that came within the reach of the average Japanese with the advent of the 1960s boom — travel, both domestic and overseas, yachting, horse races, fishing, bowling and a variety of spectator sports. By now, *pachinko* has firmly entrenched itself as the king of mass entertainment.

Meanwhile the pinball machines have been improved. In immediate postwar years, models in use had 18 or so holes but produced only a couple of balls as a reward even when one hit the winning hole. More recently, *pachinko* machine manufacturers made models which have fewer holes but reward the winner with up to 80 balls at a time. Then, the authorities, always wary of speculative urge among the masses, saw a menace to public moral sense and decreed that the reward be limited to 15 balls.

Pachinko manufacturers have also restructured the machines so that lazy players can now enjoy the game by just manipulating the knob without bothering to hand-feed the balls and flip the lever as they had to in days gone by. (J.S.)



A happy customer picks prizes of his choice.



Left: A successful player heads for the prize counter with heavy trays. Below: Automatic ball counting machine facilitates attendants' work.



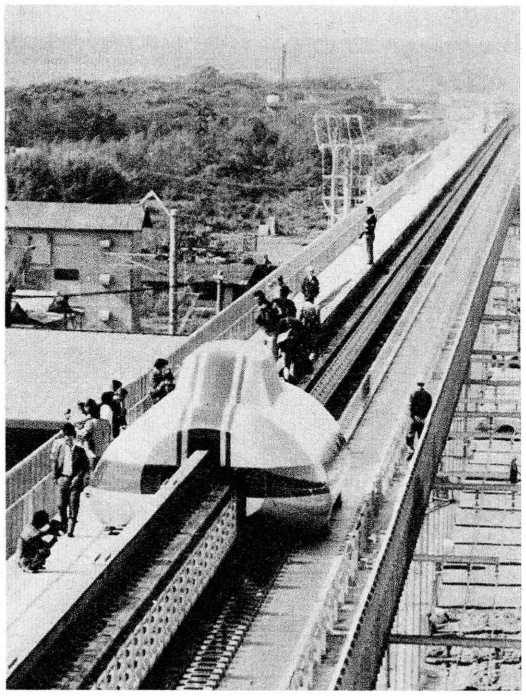




Above: Author of the article shows off bagfuls of prizes. Left: This attendant takes charge of the prize counter which looks more like a haberdashery.

Current Topics

'Floating Train' Prototype Unveiled at JNR Test Center



The Japanese National Railways (JNR) prototype superspeed "floating train" was unveiled for the first time on April 16 at the opening ceremony of the newly completed JNR test center in Hyuga City, Miyazaki Prefecture, southern Kyushu.

The streamlined research vehicle works on the principle of a magnetic-powered linear motor. It measures 13 meters long, 2.7 meters high, 3.8 meters wide and weighs 10 tons.

According to the JNR project promoters, a track for the vehicle's test run extending 7 kilometers from the test center will be constructed by 1979. Part of the track is scheduled to be completed by this summer to start test runs at the initial speed of 200 kilometers per hour. Project planners set the maximum target of this futuristic train system at 500 kmph, or more than twice the maximum speed of the JNR Shinkansen bullet train.

The test center is equipped with computers and various instruments and is staffed by 57 electric, mechanical and civil engineering experts.

The staff plans to examine the safety levitation and propulsion of the floating train, function of emergency brakes, and the extent of vibration and noise through the test runs.

The data collected will be sent to the National Railway Technology Laboratory in Kokubunji, Tokyo, for further analysis.

The new mass transportation system adopts the renovative technologies of "linear motor" and "magnetic levitation." The vehicle will be levitated about 10 centimeters above the track on a magnetic cushion and will be propelled by a magnet-powered linear motor.

The system is free from friction between the steel wheels and the rails to enable the train to run at a speed far higher than the conventional wheel-attached trains.

Besides the high speed, the system is free from noise and vibration.

Development of similar kind of new transportation system is under way in Canada, the U.S., West Germany and France.

Senior Citizens' Rental Business in Full Swing

The rental bicycle business, run by a group of elderly men and women of Asuka-mura in Nara Prefecture, is proving to be a great success, particularly among the young people.

The Takamatsu Rental Club was started by 38 local citizens, their ages ranging from 63 to 76, with an investment of ¥30,000 collected from each member as a joint capital, following the "Asuka Boom" caused by the 1972 discovery of the murals of the Takamatsuzuka tumulus.

Their initial purpose was to earn enough money to go on group trips to hot springs.

With the number of rental bicycles increased from the initial 40 to 140, the club now has become a major rent-a-bike shop among 19 members of the Asuka Cycling Association.

Being both owners and employees of the business themselves, the elders take their turns in "barking" for young customers in front of Asuka Station of Kintetsu Line, where they find a large crowd of tourists planning to visit Asuka-mura.

Their enterprise, now in full swing, is said to be in competition with the older major rental cycle shops here.

The profit has been distributed among the members of the club, part of which was spent for their group trips, to nearby spas or their charity visits to nursing homes where they enjoyed socializing with other elder people.



Tokyo Police Inaugurate First Distaff Riot Squad

The first policewomen's riot squad of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) was inaugurated April 26. Consisting of 201 policewomen, the unit is called the Metropolitan Policewomen's Special Mobile Unit, headed by Police Inspector Michiko Nakanishi, 53, of the Second Personnel Section.

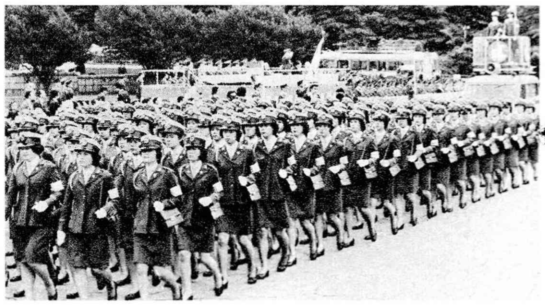
The aim of organizing the women's riot squad is to soften the "severe image" of the men's riot police held among the public. It also gives policewomen opportunities to engage in new duties other than the ones they have so far been doing.

Of the 1,500 MPD policewomen, about 70 per cent have been assigned to traffic control duties with the remaining 30 per cent working at either the Crime Prevention Division or the Criminal Investigation Division.

The women will never physically clash with rioters. Instead, their primary function will be to assist male riot police in other ways.

A new police jeep, carrying a symbol mark of a rabbit, will be used by the women's mobile unit.

The first drill of the unit was performed on Jan. 12 at the time of a demonstration by old people petitioning for more welfare benefits in front of the Diet Building.



Manufacturer Reveals New Fireproof Capsule

In order to cash in on an earthquake scare, an enterprising Tokyo manufacturer has developed an "underground fireproof capsule." It is a cubicle to be buried underground to keep people safe from scorching flames in the case of a large earthquake triggering fires.

To prove its effectiveness, the manufacturer, Sawada Soken Co. in Saga, Koto Ward, recently conducted an experiment on open ground in Minamikamata, Ota Ward, with the participation of three volunteers.

Inside the capsule capable of withstanding heat of 900-1,100 C was a 700-liter oxygen cylinder, which would last six hours for five persons. It was also equipped with a periscope.

Three volunteers, two housewives and a man, entered the capsule for the experiment.

Then, a small timber hut built over the capsule was set on fire.

While flames raged, the three in the capsule communicated with people on the ground by means of a transceiver, exchanging a few words such as — "How do you feel?" — "Fine." — "How is the temperature inside?" — "Just about 16 C."

Half an hour later after the timber had completely burned, one of the women emerged through the opened hatch smiling, followed by the two other volunteers who also emerged safely.



In a test of a fireproof capsule, a fire is set on the mound which contains the capsule (above photo) and a housewife crawls out of the shelter safely after the fire dies out (below).

75-Yr.-Old Man Finishes 600-Kilometer Solo Jog

A 75-year-old man of Omagari City in Akita Prefecture arrived in Tokyo May 22, finishing a 600-kilometer solo run from Omagari in 20 days. The man, Ushitaro Sakakida, an undertaker, arrived at Ueno Park at 10 a.m., cheered by many persons.

He started from the Omagari City Hall on May 3 and had run through Akita, Yamagata, Fukushima, Tochigi and Saitama prefectures. Pacing himself at about 30 kilometers a day, he ran during the daytime and slept in a camping car which his son-in-law and an employee drove in turn to accompany him throughout the route.

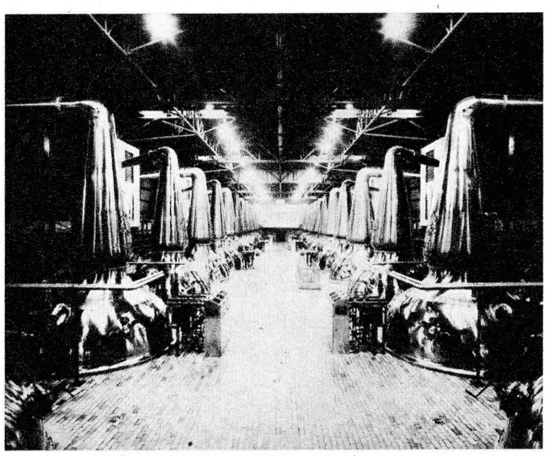
Eiichi Uchiyama, head of the Taito Ward Office, Miss Taito Ward and about 50 other persons greeted Sakakida at his goal in front of the popular statue of Saigo Takamori in Ueno Park.

Small of stature, at 152 centimeters, and weighing 45 kilograms, Sakakida began running 17 years ago to build up his body after an operation for stomach cancer.



World's Largest Whisky Distillery

This is what Suntory, Ltd. claims is the world's largest whisky distillery, completed recently at its Hakushu Distillery in Yamanashi Prefecture. The nation's top whisky maker has expanded the capacity of the distillery by building new distilling tanks and silos at a total cost of ¥5 billion. The new facilities double Suntory's annual capacity to 40,000 kiloliters.



Ultrathin Radio

Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. has developed an ultrathin, tiny transistor radio that will fit in the breast pocket of a shirt.

The Pepper AM-band radio measures 7.1 centimeters by 12.7 centimeters and weighs 130 grams. It features improved sound quality, compared with similar products on the market, thanks to newly developed technology, according to the makers.

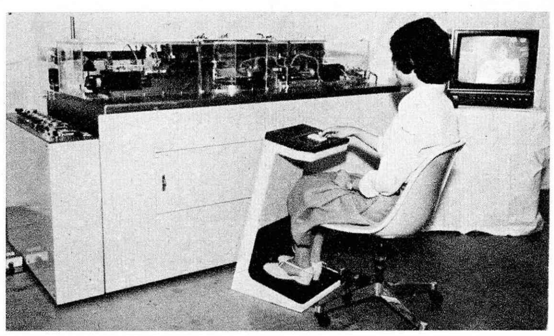
Matsushita plans to produce 30,000 Pepper radios a month. The retail price will be ¥7,800.



Video Disc System

Hitachi, Ltd., has developed a prototype of an optical video disc system that can record 50,000 to 100,000 signatures on one video disc and retrieve and reproduce a desired picture in 0.5 to three seconds. The recording and reproduction is done by laser.

The system will be useful in such areas as banking for retrieving depositors' signatures, police for fingerprints, and hospitals for X-ray pictures. It is expected to find a wide field of application in still picture broadcasting and in visual communications through coordination with facsimile transmission, according to the makers.



ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to inform our readers that due to the rising production cost and other factors, we have been compelled to suspend publication of Japan Illustrated for an indefinite period.

Regular subscribers who have paid their subscriptions in advance will be informed individually with regard to refunding of the balance on hand and other matters.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank our readers for their patronage over the years.

THE JAPAN TIMES, LTD.

READERS' FORUM

Dear Editor:

As a longtime reader of The Japan Times, I have consistently enjoyed Patricia Massy's column "Edo Etceteras." I enjoyed just as much "Gossamer Lights of Gifu" (Winter 1977) in which she managed, in her usual excellent form, to translate the beauty of an art form into the print medium.

It was interesting to note that it had taken the Japanese people some time to recognize the suitability of the simple white lanterns as appropriate in contemporary interior design. For myself, I was instantly attracted to the simple elegance of their design years ago. It is sad to see that some things Japanese must find their way abroad to return to popularity here.

Thank you for an excellent article that let me understand better the intricate craftsmanship that goes into the making of these delicate, not lanterns, but individual creations of art.

JOSEPHA BELL

Tokyo

Dear Editor:

Well Don Maloney had me doing it again — chuckling all the way through another sociological, geographical, psychological analysis of Japan and her wonderful people (Still Another Lesson from the Orient, Spring 1977).

Having bought his first book and then his second, I find myself having to be content with anything I can get my hands on until his third one comes out.

Which brings me to the problem of this latest article. I'm afraid it was just a couple of chapters too short — more and longer pieces please!

(Mrs.) HERMAN DOWD

Tokyo

To the Editor:

"Gossamer Lights of Gifu" (Spring 1977) provided an interesting history of the making of, not just a lantern, but an art form in itself. I have long admired these lanterns, especially the elegant simplicity of the white which I was amused to discover the Japanese initially hesitated to use.

It is indeed enlightening to learn of the craftsmanship that actually goes into the creation of this wonderful medium. May Patricia Massy be launded for her excellent work in translating this visual experience into print. In this age of Sony and Panasonic and Toyota, it is reassuring to find a craft that is not on the brink of extinction.

LINDA WIDENAUR

Carmel, CA.

Readers are invited to send in their comments, queries and suggestions. We'll answer your questions to the best of our ability.

JAPAN ILLUSTRATED

Souvenir — for yourself and your friends

A NEWLY COMPILED PHOTO BOOK

KABUKI

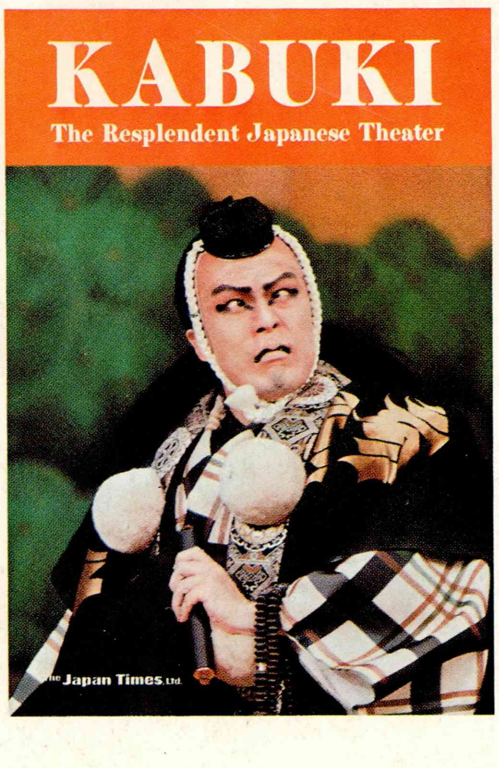
The Resplendent Japanese Theater

Overseas price: $15.00 including seamail postage

Domestic price: ¥3,500 Postage: ¥240

Kabuki is a time-honored theatrical art that is a pride of Japan. Composed of three elements — song, dance and drama, it has been elaborated and perfected over a span of three centuries. This stage art is really brimming with the quintessence of Japan's traditional art of public entertainment as well as the sentiments of the Japanese people. Kabuki lovers are now increasing among foreigners as well. This is probably because Kabuki's bold stage composition, colors and thoroughly stylized performance must delight and impress everybody, transcending the language barrier.

In this Japan Times Photo Book, you can enjoy renowned scenes of Kabuki — dances, love scenes, fighting scenes, etc. — through the brilliant works of Chiaki Yoshida, a topnotch photographer of Kabuki.



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